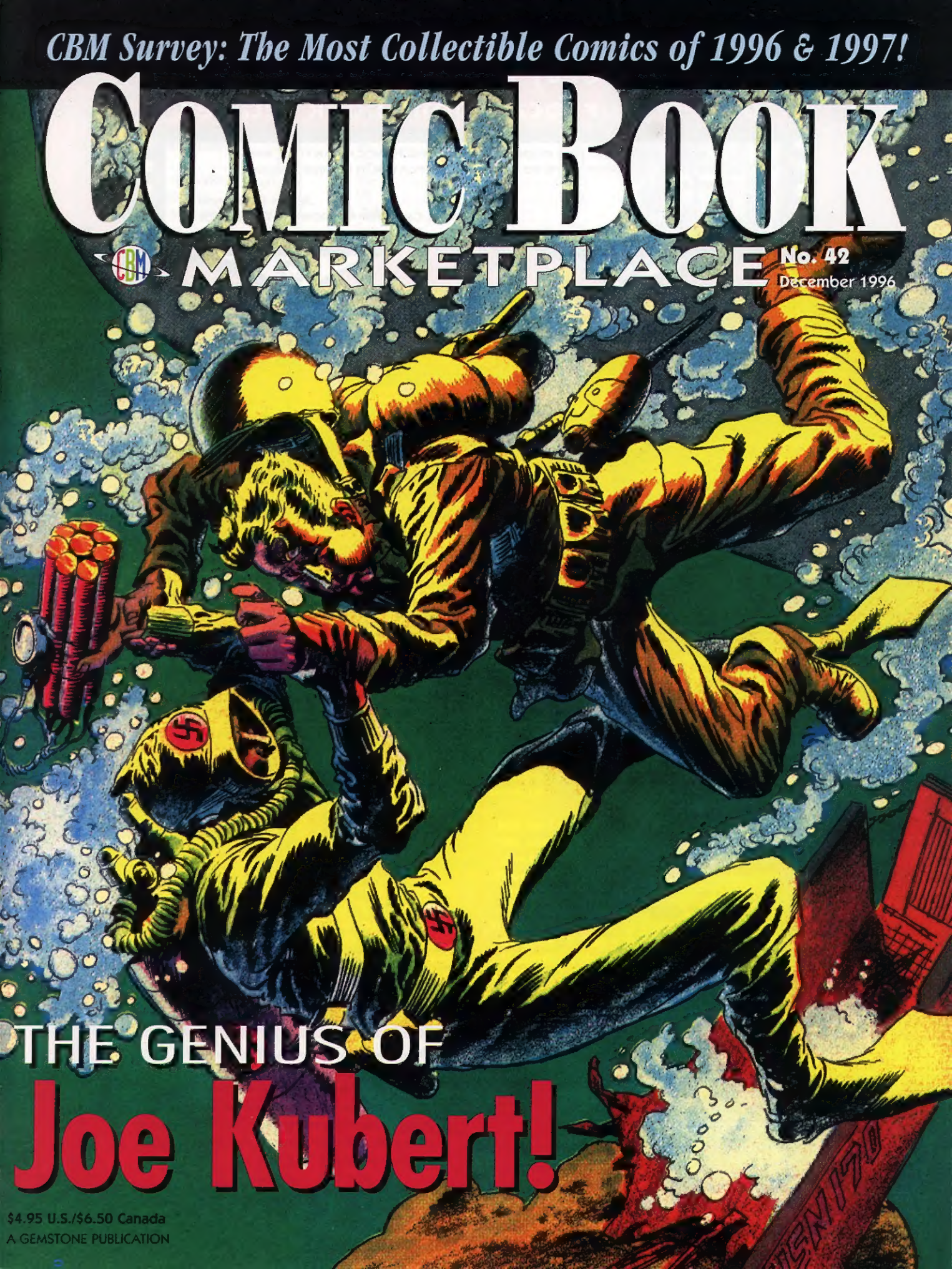
CBM Survey: The Most Collectible Comics of 1996 & 1997!

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

No. 42
December 1996



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CBM CONTENTS

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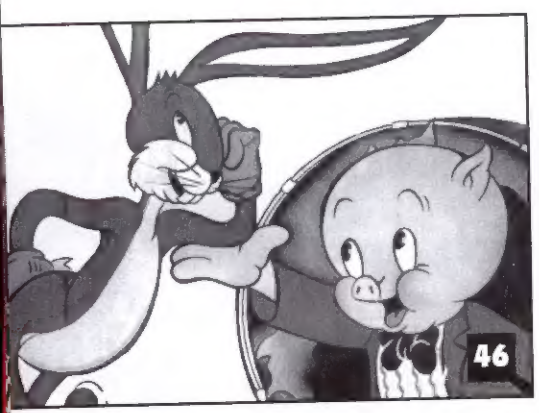

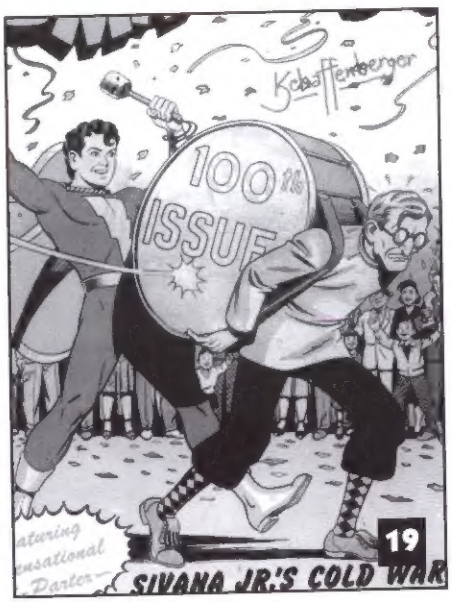

FEATURES

Tarzan of the Comic Books!
A safari through the history of the jungle's most famous ape-man! by Matthew Gore 24

The Genius of Joe Kubert!
From Tor, to Viking Prince, to Hawkman, to Tarzan… Joltin' Joe has done it all! An exclusive interview by Steve Ringgenberg 30

Wascawy Wabbit Cawectibles!
Five beautiful and scarce Bugs Bunny treasures! by Mike Brandenburg 46

The Most Collectible Comics of 1996!
CBM readers pick the 50 top books of the year! 50

The Most Collectible Comics of 1997!
CBM readers predict which 50 comics will lead the pack in the coming year! 52

Making Sense of Pence Comics!
That pesky and wonderfully nostalgic price stamp from across the pond! by Ian Faris with Barry Forshaw 55

The Case of the Missing Four Colors!
Solving the "missing numbers probably do not exist" mystery! by Duane Dimock 57

COLUMNS

Adventures Into Weird Words
A look at a wacky new sub-genre…funny fantasy! by Pat S. Calhoun 15

Nolan's Notebook
The strange case of the number 100! by Michelle Nolan 19

Second Time Around
A guide to Kubert reprints in DC Special! by Shawn Hamilton 65

Department of the Strange
Herbie vs. Fidel! by Lou Mougin 66

Contarino's Corner
A new spin on an old question "which Marvel key ranks #1?" by J. Keith Contarino 67

Volume 2 • Number 42
December 1996
A Gemstone Publication

ON THE COVER:
A closeup of the cover of G.I. Combat #46 (March 1957) featuring Joe Kubert's electrifying rendition of underwater hand-to-hand combat. Note the use of a color spectrum without reds... just as it would be underwater. © 1996 DC

DEPARTMENTS

Letter from the Editor 8
Marketplace Mail 10
CBM Color Gallery 37
Back Issue Dept. 40
Horak's Humor 69
Subscription Info 69
Schiffman Report 70
Market Reports 70
No Contest! Contest 73

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Issue Number #42, December 1996

DEALER PERFORMANCE

I get quite a few calls and letters every day from individuals wanting to buy and sell comics. Many just ask for a contact name I've ordered from that I was happy with… but more and more, I've been asked about the criteria I use to evaluate "dealer performance". After some badgering, long discussions, and much thought, here are those criteria. Let me preface them by saying they are only my personal criteria, and may not necessarily be right for you.

1. Interpersonal Skills – Maybe it's my tender ego, or just the consumer advocate in me… but I like to be treated in a polite way. I'm not asking for subservience… or even a discount! But it is really important to me that the dealer be polite, exercise basic interpersonal communication skills, and practice basic courtesy. When they do, it says to me "you are an important customer, Gary… and I appreciate your business."

2. Absence of Hysterical behavior – Amazingly, collectors are telling me this has become more of a problem lately, and I've seen it myself on occasion. Scenarios range from "because you returned my book, I'm never going to sell you anything again" or "because you bought (or sold) a book from my competitor, I'm not going to show you my good stuff anymore!" This smacks of classic "spoiled brat behavior," and may be a prime indicator that you're working with the wrong dealer. My unfulfilled (so far) hope is that adult hobbyists conduct business like adults and endeavor to act like adults. Luckily, the majority do… it's the "brats" that sometimes give the hobby a bad rep.

3. Guarantee – I rarely send material back, but when I do, I want a hassle-free experience. So I look for an "unconditional" return guarantee. I want to see the phrase "money promptly returned if dissatisfied for any reason." Savvy dealers know that if I have confidence in their merchandise, I'll be a loyal customer… for a very long time. That translates to many thousands of dollars over many transactions… not just "this deal at this moment". Reliable dealers offer a guarantee not because they want to be "good guys…" but because it's good business.

4. Generally Consistent Grading – Everyone has different grading standards, and some vary from the norm more than others. I don't care if the dealer grades differently than I, because, as a customer I will eventually get to know his "grading style" (and hopefully he will get to know mine). All I really need as a customer is confidence that he will grade in a generally consistent way. It helps me, of course, but it also helps the dealer by reducing wasted mailings, phone calls, and general aggravation.

5. Objective Advice – It radically increases my confidence in a dealer when he is willing to share his honest feelings about the material he has for sale. This means they tell me what they think, without a sales pitch, when I ask. I look for dealers that point out the bad with the good, and I'm especially wary of dealers who attempt "the hard sell" on every book in their stock, the minute I inquire about it.

So there you have it, my personal view of the complex world of dealer behaviors. The good news is, in spite of the few negative experiences I've had, the other 99% of the deals have been fair, efficient, timely, and pleasant (dare I say even fun). That's because the vast majority of dealers are good business men who are honest and friendly. They understand that we collectors aren't always perfect… but they treat us as if we are, anyway! Best,

Gary

Gary M. Carter, Editor

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Julie Schwartz writes

So! All the while the great Neal Adams and "grumpy" Julie Schwartz -- that "old style editor" who let "nothing get past him, you can't fool him" -- were holed up in my DC office, Neal was secretly pocketing a [faulty] tape recorder! So! That accounts for some of the [faulty] quotes in Neal's [otherwise great] October CBM interview!

Julie Schwartz, New York

Cover to cover

Just read the latest CBM from cover to cover (as I do every month) and having renewed my subscription I can look forward to another year of your fine magazine!

Ian Faris, England

Obscured by rampant speculation

There is a disturbing trend in comics. Obviously enjoying the hobby is key because we never wish to lose the fans we have. There are speculators in all fields and comic books are no exception. This is not AT&T stock or IBM where the only reason for investing is a profit margin. Pen pals, letter writing, TV, movies, etc. might be a motive for collecting comics. Unfortunately, cataclysmic comic events like the newer Spider-Man #1 and The Death of Superman were obscured by rampant speculation. With millions printed and stacks of them saved, they will never put a student through Harvard and that shouldn't be a logical motive.

In addition, scarce books like Merry Christmas from Mickey Mouse; and Captain Marvel's Thrill Book, which were once strongly promoted, have not stood the test of time. Just because everyone is talking about a trend now, doesn't mean future scrutiny will bear it out.

Bottom line... your personal enjoyment will keep you in comic books. I feel we should collect for ourselves and let the Joneses keep up with someone else!

Richard M. Brown, Michigan

Berg, Feiffer, and Wood

First, I would like to say how much I enjoy CBM. The Will Eisner tribute is just one of the many I've read over the years but I do not grow tired of seeing his beautiful work reproduced.

Frankly, I'm a little confused about the comments made by Feiffer and Berg. I can only interpret Feiffer's comment, "I don't understand Wally Wood's work," as Wood has no business being a cartoonist. I see no Alex Raymond in Wood's work, on the contrary, Wally Wood seems to be greatly influenced by Eisner. I don't think Feiffer would understand Mark Schultz either.

David Berg is really pushing it to claim that Feiffer is a genius. His psychological and social vignettes became tedious years ago, yet I do admire his work for those times. David Berg may have ghosted some of Wally Wood's work, yet it sounds as if he did all of Wood's stuff. Scores of cartoonists have had assistance on their work. I'm sure Will Eisner is guilty of this too, yet it does not diminish the man's work. Although denied, I believe professional jealousy exists for a lot of underlying reasons where one is artist is critical of another.

Mike Roberts, Oklahoma

Just mention their names

I enjoyed Gene Lomoriello's interview with the accomplished Joe Sinnott (CBM #39). Readers of The Jack Kirby Collector chose Sinnott as their "favorite Kirby inker" in a 1995 poll. Kirby and Sinnott made a great team, although they met only once! Sinnott's remarkable run on The Fantastic Four will assure him posterity, but his creative talents extend beyond inking. The fine fantasy art he produced for Atlas in the fifties offers evidence of his ability as both penciler and inker.

I used to wonder whatever happened to Robert Bell. My curiosity was satisfied when CBM #36 included an engaging discussion with the former mail-order maven. The lengthy dialogue with Roy Thomas (CBM #35) was another superb feature. A key figure in early fandom, Thomas developed into a writer/editor of distinction.

While Joe Sinnott, (*Continued on page 12*)

Roy Thomas, and Robert Bell might be unknown to the general public, just mention their names to any Silver Age fan and you are sure to see a smile. I look forward to the Neal Adams interview, as well as future discussions with other industry luminaries. Keep those CBM interviews, articles and columns coming. Thank you.

Timothy M. Walters, Oklahoma

A tortured life

To me, the highlight of CBM #39 was the second part of the Eisner interview. This was history at its best being retold by the actual participants. Disturbing to read was Feiffer and Berg's talking about Wally Wood. I feel he was a brilliant artist who led a tortured life. Whether he was penciling or inking, he always elevated the material he was working on.

What can I say about the inking (and penciling) artistry of Joe Sinnott? He was simply Jack Kirby's best inker. When the "King" left Marvel, he was tapped to continue the style of these books until other permanent pencilers could be found. Looking at the illustrations that accompanied the article showed me that he still has it and that he could teach today's artists a thing or two.

I'd like to refute what Keith Contarino said about no one east of the Mississippi preferring Sgt. Rock to Sgt. Fury. I grew up on the East Coast (New York City), and all the guys I knew (even diehard Marvel fans) preferred the realistic adventures of Rock to the typical super-heroics of Nick Fury. DC's war books were way better than anything Marvel put out on the subject! Thanks again for another great issue!

Eric Blackmore, Tennessee

Setting the record straight

Recently there has been a lot of talk concerning the Tom Reilly collection of pedigree comic books. I was personally involved in acquiring and selling over two-thirds of this pedigree collection (erroneously known as the "San Francisco" collection) to many comic book collectors. I was also a founding partner of Comics & Comix in 1972, along with Bud Plant and John Barrett. Eventually we evolved Comics & Comix into the first comic book chain store operation in the world.

We came upon the fabled Tom Reilly collection Easter of 1973 at the first comic book convention in the Bay Area (which we also hosted) at UC Berkeley's Pauley Ballroom. (It was also the first comics convention to center on "creator's rights" which is something almost taken for granted these days.)We used the extensive proceeds from the sale of most of the collection to quickly open up three more stores.

Besides getting the name "Tom Reilly" correct, the information in the Photo Journal Guide to Comic Books is unfortunately inaccurate. Even though portions of my collection were photographed for the book, for some reason Ernie and I never got around to discussing the Reilly books.

If we had, I believe his description of how one of the best comic book collections ever found was discovered would have included mention of Mike Manyak, Nick Marcus, David Belmont, Bob Selvig and myself (along with John Barrett and Bud Plant, of course) as the original collector/dealers who acquired the first third of the collection.

The story began when the first set of Reilly's relatives came to the *(Continued on page 74)*

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Continued from page 12

BerkeleyCon's Pauley Ballroom (second floor) lugging an entire pallet on a palette loader they borrowed from the building maintenance people. It was piled high with boxes of comic books!

Mike and Nick were the first ones to encounter these people and they quickly "cherry-picked" all the Timelys from the batch. Long time friend and comics dealer Roger Nelson (of New Orleans) had come to our show and he told me recently that when he saw the growing frenzy surrounding these books, he backed off and didn't want to get involved.

The old couple with these gems then became alarmed (and rightly so) when they started to get substantially higher offers on certain books on the pallet, because they then realized that they had just been taken advantage of by the first two purchasers. They then indicated that they wished to go home and think this one out.

As they were leaving, we gave them a copy of the latest Price Guide (1972) and helped them load all the boxes back into their car. Then they drove off.

A few days later, they gave us a call and the first deal was consummated. David and Bob hung out every day along Telegraph Ave as the "collector bug" had surely infected them in a big way after seeing this incredible "virgin" one-owner collection. It took us most of one night to split it all up. We first pulled out all the "big" books and made piles according to value. We then cut a deck of cards for "first" pick and preceded through the stacks. By the time we got to the large stacks of $50, $20 and $10 books it was morning. We just dealt them out like cards… as we were exhausted. And this was just the first third of this collection!

We (Comics & Comix) acquired the other two separate thirds a short time later all to ourselves. Included in these other two thirds were all the "missing" Timelys that Mike Manyak and Nick Marcus did not acquire from the first third… like Captain America #2-17, 20, 25 through the mid 1945 issue; Human Torch #3; Mystic #1-4, 7-10; Daring Mystery #1-10; Young Allies #6 through the mid 1945 issue, and most of the Marvel Mystery issues through the mid 1945 issue, plus thousands of other comics.

I ran the "collectibles room" in our Berkeley store. John Barrett was otherwise occupied ramrodding the "new" comics side of our operation. Bud Plant was busy in San Jose going to business college and beginning to apply what he was learning to his retail mail order operation. Bud was also my roommate when all this occurred. I would come home from the store and tell him about all the new world's pricing records we were setting with these books. He, in turn, shared some of his growing classroom knowledge with me when he thought it would do me some good.

There were no Superman #1 or #2 in the Tom Reilly collection. Number #3 was the first in the run on that title. The Action run started in the mid-teens (late summer of 1939). There was an All American #16-on, Detective #27-on missing only a few from the early Batman numbers, Whiz #2 (#1)-on, as well as More Fun #52-on along with virtually every comic book from late 1939 through the summer of 1945 (with stray

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Fantastic Four, Molecule Man, Alicia © Marvel Entertainment

Continued from page 74

exceptions). There were no Marvel Mystery #1, #2, or #3... that title started with #4. Many of the runs that began before the summer of 1939 picked up with the superhero first appearances.

For example, the Reilly Detective Comics #27 and Whiz Comics #2 (#1) were first sold to Burl Rowe (formerly) of Houston, Texas for $2,200 and $2,000 respectively. He, in turn, sold the 'Tec 27 to Gary and Lane Carter. They eventually passed it along to someone else sometime later. I believe this copy could be easily traced with just a modicum of "sleuthing."

As another example, during January of 1974 I sold Superman #4, along with the Reilly copy of More Fun #101, to a collector who was then living in San Francisco. Six months later (in July), I sold this same collector the Reilly Superman #3 when he decided to up-grade his copy. I distinctly remember the #4 having a slight case of "paper/color curl" as I used to call it when the thick layer of color ink would sometimes simply "curl" up away from the cover, usually at the spine (early Timelys can have this problem too). This particular #4 had this problem right around the lower staple thus keeping it from being really "high-grade." This collector still has the Reilly More Fun #101 as well.

Unlike the Mile High collection which saw many of the titles sold in mostly unbroken sets, the Reilly collection was initially spread all over fandom. Here's how that happened: The runs were virtually complete on titles such as Captain America, Batman, All Star, Whiz, Sensation, Boy Commandos, Human Torch, World's Finest, Daring Mystery, Pep, Green Lantern, Flash, All Flash, Wonder Woman, Blue Ribbon, Wonder, Flame, Uncle Sam, Blackhawk, Military, Police, Hit, Captain Marvel, Captain Marvel Jr., Spy Smasher, Planet, Wings, Ranger, Jungle, etc, etc, etc. Virtually every title that got printed starting in late 1939 on (until Tom Reilly's parents were informed of their son's death in the Pacific Warfront during a kamikaze attack the summer of 1945) were well represented with complete or near complete runs on titles that started before the summer of 1939. Tom's parents kept his room sealed until they passed away themselves in 1972.

With the death of Reilly's parents, three entirely independent sets of relatives inherited the contents of the house. This meant the comic books were arbitrarily split into three piles in a seemingly haphazard fashion. Most of the books never even had the chance to be read, as Tom seemed to have joined the Navy in early 1942 (shortly after Pearl Harbor).

His parents kept up all his titles for him with a local newsstand. That unknown newsstand used a unique rubber stamp on the back cover to identify which books to hold for Tom, thereby preserving the ability to identify most of books in the collection. In late April 1973, during the course of acquiring these comics, another collector and myself were allowed by a couple of the relatives to look briefly into Tom Reilly's original bedroom where the comic book collection had been so carefully stored all those years. I tried to learn and to retain as much background as possible regarding the background behind this very important collection.

In the aftermath of the find, Comics & Comix received extensive world-wide AP/UPI coverage about this collection as we were the first to "sell a comic book for $2,000." It caused quite a stir, and the media coverage that ensued caused three more copies of Detective #27 to come our way in short order, all from various "first owner" collections. Those sold quickly as well. There was also a tremendous influx of collectors who converged on our Berkeley store. We built a special, separate room just to house the collection. Our stock quickly mushroomed because many more people brought in their childhood comics treasures to sell, combined with all the trading. Soon

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the Berkeley Comics & Comix became the northern California "Mecca" of comics.

The "pedigree" came many years later. The Reilly collection books sold so fast that we never had to place a single mail order advertisement to sell them. Word of mouth on these traveled faster than we could so by time we took these to the 1973 San Diego Comic Con, it was like a piranha "feeding frenzy."

The books continued to change hands. Then around 15 years ago, I noticed the first ad attaching a "name" to them in an effort to easily describe and distinguish them. For the record, as far as I have been able to ascertain, Ron Pussell was the first person to begin describing them as "San Francisco" copies. While sounding rather exotic, it is technically inaccurate because these books came from the East Bay area... being stored in Lafayette and surfacing in Berkeley. At the time, I didn't think much about the new name, one way or another.

By 1975, most of the Reilly books had gone to their first tier of new owners, but many of the books were also quickly being traded back and forth (and constantly up in value) as they were so "new" looking they always brought slightly more than Guide... but the books still did not have a name. That wouldn't happen until nearly half a decade later. (It was also at a CasualCon in 1978 that Chuck Rosanski debuted his "Mile High" books on the West Coast. He brought six long boxes, including the Flash #104 and before the day was done, he had sold virtually every one of them.)

Ron Pussell says that he first became conscious of the "San Francisco" pedigree sometime in 1980-81 when he attended a Creation Con at the Hyatt-Regency in the Embarcaderro section of San Francisco. There, Mike Manyak sold Ron his Reilly copy of Human Torch #8 and a few other Timelys. He noticed that it was comparable to the Mile Highs in almost every aspect, so he offered it to an NYC attorney... calling it a book from San Francisco. Ron then started to actively seek out more of the same. He kept finding a stray copy here and there.

Ron's first large, major batch of Reilly books came from David Belmont when David moved from Rochester, New York, and opened a store in Westwood (near UCLA). Ron again referred to them as "San Francisco" copies. The name "San Francisco" copies spread from there and it stuck.

By that point in time, it had been almost ten years since the Reilly Collection had originally been found and dispersed.

Alas, because of the relative speed with which these books were dispersed (due to "collector frenzy"), there is no "definitive" master catalog, listing the entire collection. However, I can still generally pick Tom Reilly copies out of a

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stack of comics without too much difficulty even after all these years. I have now followed the progress of the popularity of this unique "pedigree" since they first surfaced in Easter 1973... but I still clearly remember most of them as if it were yesterday.

Thanks for this opportunity to set the historical record straight. For many of us "old dinosaurs," comics fandom is a way of life...

Robert Beerbohm, Nebraska

More on the Tom Reilly collection

I'd like to add my two cents worth to the recent discussions about the the origins of the Tom Reilly/San Francisco collection.

First it is clear that the otherwise excellent Photo-Journal Guide is way off on its story about the collection. Rather than "coming into" the Berkeley Comics and Comix store in 1976, it actually first surfaced at the BerkeleyCon in 1973. Bob Selvig and Dave Belmont were there at the initial contact and scored the first books with us. Subsequently, the owners contacted the Comics and Comix store (we were sponsoring and running the BerkeleyCon that year) and John Barrett and Bob Beerbohm (then my partners in C&C) went out and made the deal for the balance of the collection. Bob Beerbohm has an excellent memory for this kind of detail, and we've talked about this and other early deals at length.

As an aside, when I was negotiating with Steve Geppi to sell my distribution business to Diamond in 1988, Steve came out and visited me in Grass Valley. Casually going through my Golden Age collection, he pulled out a copy of Military #15 and declared it a "San Francisco" book. I had long forgotten the fact, although I did recall getting a book or two that I needed from the deal. That was 15 years earlier, and being busy with college, my mail order business, and my recent marriage, the acquisition had not made a big impact at the time.

Then just a few months ago, Bob Beerbohm was looking through some of my collection, and I mentioned that Steve had identified a Military. Bob went through the issues and yanked the same book out, showing me (once again) the marks that identified it as part of Tom Reilly's collection.

Keep up the good work on CBM... though I could live with less features about "extraordinary rising values" of Golden Age, and more on the books and (especially) their creators.

I find the whole value game a bit self-serving. Besides which, I collect low-grade books myself and only care about rising values in the light of how it affects me, as a "bottom feeder" in the market. I think things have gotten pretty silly of late and everyone should remember that nothing keeps going up forever. They thought the stock market would... and it's hit some bumpy roads.

And California real estate, now there was a "guaranteed" investment... now down 20% since 1991. I think it can and will happen in rare comics. We already all know that some of the price guides overstates the value of many, many recent comics that now gather dust in 25¢ and 50¢ boxes in hundreds of stores all over the country.

Bud Plant, California

Bound volume query

My introduction to your fine magazine may be a bit unique and my collecting of comic books and Golden Age books, in particular, may also be a bit different.

As a pre-teen until age 14 in 1965 I enthusiastically collected superhero comic books. My discovery of girls was the main reason I stopped collecting comic books, but unlike so many other kids, I neatly boxed my Silver Age collection and carried it with me from apartment to condominium and homes where it now resides today (now in mylar).

Included were dozens of pre-1960 books that were hunted down in "second hand junk shops" for a nickel, regardless of condition. In the early 1960's the joy of finding an early "Ant-Man," Fantastic Four, or Flash was completely outweighed by the condition. As a 12-year-old boy I wanted to own and read Fantastic Four #1 and never thought much about the "grade." My friends and I traded, loaned and read and reread books for pleasure, not for investment.

Four years ago I began to fulfill a childhood fantasy and began collecting Golden Age books. These were books I heard about as a kid, knew existed as the old Justice Society reappeared in the pages of Justice League, Flash, etc. and Captain America, Human Torch, etc. appeared in a Marvel reprint book (Fantasy Masterpieces, for a few issues, in particular). Sometimes the letters to the editor pages in the Justice League of America were the ultimate tease as to the existence of the Golden Age books as fans, older than myself, discussed the past and which heroes they would like to see resurrected.

Since I don't read modern comics, I had never heard of your magazine. But when I saw it in a catalog, I ordered all your back issues in one fell swoop. Talk about an overload of information at one time!

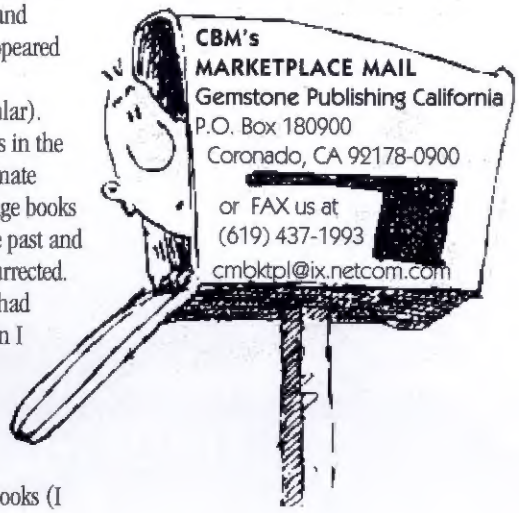
Today, I own about 170 Golden Age books (I actually stop my collection in December of 1945 and specialize in World War II superhero books). I have acquired a few items that maybe your readers can help me identify.

About a year ago, Steve Higgins, the owner of Outer Limits in Waltham, Mass. called me about some bound volumes of Quality Comics. I purchased two bound volumes. One contains 11 issues of Crack Comics from 1941 (#9-#19 as there were only 11 issues in 1941) and the other contains 12 issues of Feature Comics from 1941 (#40-#51). They are both in identical, black binders, trimmed and I hope are actual archives from Quality Comics. The dealer told me their origin is unknown. Do any of your "historians" know their origin? The color on the covers is incredibly vivid as they have been protected from the air due to the binding. He had a few other "Quality" binders from 1947 and they were also in the same black covers.

Secondly, when dealing with particularly scarce comics (Gerber Scarcity Index of 7 and higher) is there anyone who registers copies of these books? For example, a couple of your issues mention Power Comics #2 of which I own a low grade copy that I bought two years ago on a whim without knowledge of its scarcity. Is there any organized effort to register such books.

Philip Davis, Massachusetts

Usually bound file copies are clearly marked as company property, although there are exceptions. Maybe you could bring your volumes to the next Chicago or San Diego Cons. There are many experts roaming the aisles and it's just possible one might give you a positive (or negative) ID. Good luck!
Send your comments or questions to: CBM's *Marketplace Mail at the following address:*



Funny Fantasy

By Pat S. Calhoun

Almost anything can be played for laughs, and comic books haven't missed many tricks in that regard. There have been funny animal comics, funny crime comics, funny hero comics, funny love comics, funny sports comics, funny war comics, and funny western comics. Some of us share a special fondness for funny fantasy comics, a genre that can tickle the imagination as well as the funny bone. The three examples that follow span the twin peaks of humorous horror and slapstick science fiction, balanced by a representative from the zany zone of unique and unclassifiable classics that are one of the chief rewards of the ever-vigilant search for four-color fun.

Our first entry is a hillbilly/fantasy/superhero-parody spin-off from Al Capp's Li'l Abner newspaper comic strip. The Shmoos were certainly the most bizarre characters to emerge from the Dogpatch backwoods. White and bulbous–like a fat bowling pin with feet–the Shmoo is known for vastness of appetite and speed breeding, at the rate they multiply only the secret laws of fantasy keep them from over-running the Earth in a week. Anyone who remembers the original Star Trek episode, "The Trouble With Tribbles", will have some insight into Shmoodom. Although the five issues of the *Shmoo* title were not written or drawn by Capp, they manage to uphold the craziness of the concept. The publisher, Toby Comics, was run by Al Capp's brother, Eliot Caplin.

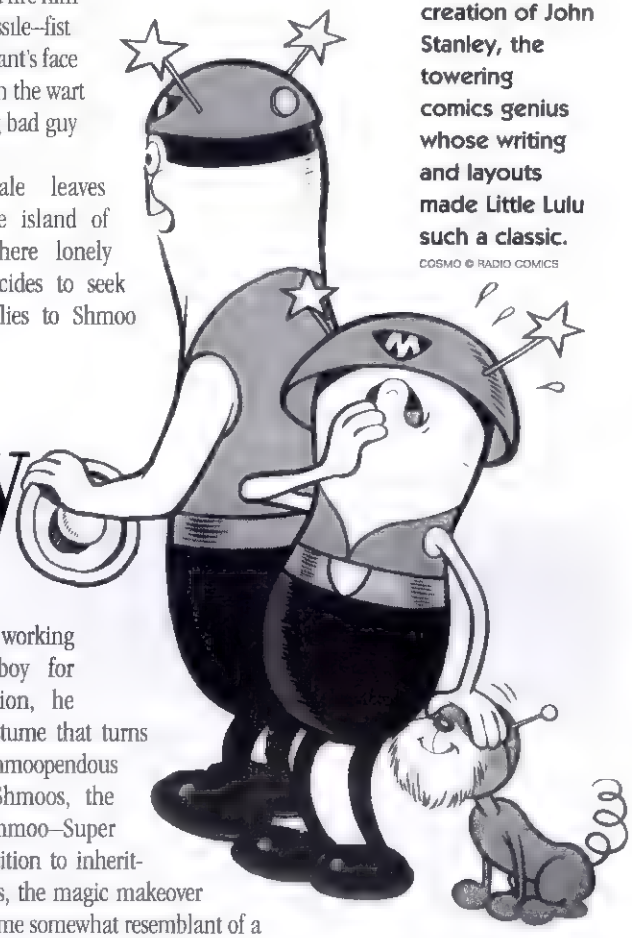
Shmoo #1 (July 1949) is the only issue to prominently feature Washable Jones, that dirty young n'er-do-well from Dogpatch. The inside front cover depicts a Shmoo football game where the players–(and even the ball!) multiply to fill the field on the first play. The first story has Washable and the Shmoos putting out a wildfire that threatens Dogpatch. Washable's mourning for the poor Shmoos who helped quell the flames by jumping on the fire and melting it out is mollified by the fact that they end up with at least as many Shmoos as when they started. In the second yarn Dogpatch is attacked by a giant whose only weak spot is the wart on his nose, but nobody in Dogpatch can reach his nose! Washable has a bunch of Shmoos link together into a huge slingshot and fire him as a human missile–fist first towards the giant's face to land a wallop on the wart that makes the big bad guy head for the hills.

The third tale leaves Dogpatch for the island of Honoshmoolu where lonely Hugh Shmoo decides to seek excitement and flies to Shmoo York. There, while working as a message boy for Western Shmoonion, he finds a magic costume that turns him into "that Shmoopendous Shmoo among Shmoos, the shmoopreme Shmoo–Super Shmoo!" In addition to inheriting super powers, the magic makeover includes a costume somewhat resemblant of a certain DC character's. Although he looks like Supe, the transformation echoes Billy B.'s metamorphosis into Captain Marvel -complete with lightning bolt!

Super Shmoo gets involved with the great film director Cecil B. De Shmoo, whose latest movie has Sweet Shmoo menaced by Frankenshmoo and Fu Manshmoo. This flick is so realistic that Super Shmoo often forgets himself and destroys thousands of dollars of sets while rescuing Sweet Shmoo from the Gruesome Shmoosome.

The inside back cover is an ad offering 3-foot tall "inflato playmate" plastic Shmoos for $2.98–because "everybody loves big toys!" The outer back cover is a U.S. savings bond ad featuring Shmoos acting out such American virtues as thrift and trust, the latter of which is demonstrated by one Shmoo shooting an apple off another's head. Such details add up to a consummate packaging of the Shmoo concept. This book defines the zany zone!

Jumping ahead a decade, into the brave new Sputnik era



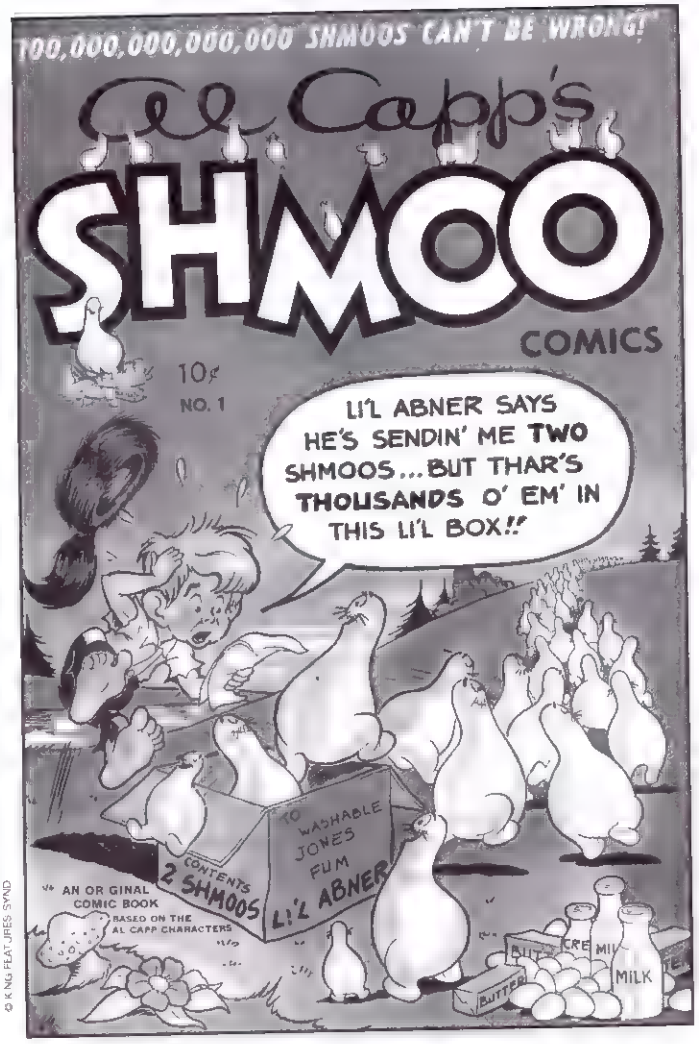
Melvin Monster #1 (Apr-Jun 1965) This ten-issue series was the creation of John Stanley, the towering comics genius whose writing and layouts made Little Lulu such a classic.

COSMO © RADIO COMICS

and the space race, for a brief moment science fiction dominated the early Silver Age. The DC universe expanded with two SF heroes, Space Ranger and Adam Strange, in 1958, and even Batman was fighting aliens as often as he chased crooks. Over at Atlas/Marvel, at the end of 1958, the "pre hero" revival began in titles like *Strange Worlds* and *World of Fantasy*. Into this fervid atmosphere, charged with the desire to "blast off" into interplanetary depths, Archie Comics launched a whimsical satellite that added considerable charm to the four-color skies. *Cosmo, The Merry Martian* #1 (August 1958) served as an antidote to the oppressive tone of DC SF, where the steady stream of alien invasions often seemed designed to foster isolationist and trigger-happy modes of thought. Cosmo and Orbi, the first two emissaries from the red planet, come to Earth for fun and adventure on a mission of mirth that filled a six-issue run.

Shmoo #1 (July 1949) The postwar years were a time of great fecundity in the four-color industry, as this first ishmoo of this remarkable series indishmootably demonstrates.

The first issue is a three-part comic novel: Chapter One, "Destination Earth", chronicles the departure of the amiable astronauts from Mars. As Cosmo and Orbi rocket towards Earth their ship is struck by a meteor, forcing them to crash-land on the moon. The art, by Bob White, offers smooth storytelling with occasional larger panels that allow fuller appreciation of the drawing, like in Chapter One's panel of the Earth seen on the Martian ship's view screen. Cosmo and Orbi and the inhabitants of Mars look like "skinny Shmoos" with arms added.



The chapter splashes are big too, and the introduction of the moon people that starts Chapter Two, "Moon Merriment", is particularly nice. The moon people are colorful little globes with arms and legs, and they help Cosmo and Orbi get to Earth by taking them on one of their flying saucer expeditions to the third planet–first spraying them with comet dust that will render them invisible to Earthlings.

Chapter Three, "Planet Playmates", has the Martians and moon-folk descending upon a baseball game. Orbi gets excited and runs out onto the field and catches a pop fly–producing mass befuddlement amongst the natives as the ball hovers in mid-air. And two hungry Lunarians abscond with a spectator's hot dog prompting this comment on technological progress, "Gosh, I don't mind instant coffee or powdered milk, b-but a hot dog that eats itself is a little too much!" Then two more moonsters steal second base (literally) at which point overwrought players from both teams begin to brawl. But after the fight, Cosmo's comet dust starts to wear off, so the aliens stage an exodus, and the first issue ends with the flying saucers returning to the moon.

Our final entry, takes us into the mid 1960s, in the waning days of four-color diversity. At Dell Comics, John Stanley, the great writer/layout genius who made Little Lulu so wonderful, put some spin on the "kid" genre with a horror spoof about a young monster.

Melvin Monster #1 (April-June 1965) establishes the premise of the series with quick precision in the opening pages. Melvin wakes up from a bad dream in the middle of the night and calls for Mummy and Baddy. Baddy is a hunchbacked ogre, and Mummy looks almost human- save for the cloths wound around her face and hands. Next morning is the first day of school, and Baddy expects Melvin to play hooky like all good monsters do. But Melvin is a monster marching to a different drum. After avoiding the family pet, Cleopatra the crocodile, whose goal in life is to munch Melvin, he starts off to school.

At Miss McGargoyle's Little Black Schoolhouse, Melvin is the first student to show up in 600 years! In an effort to regain her solitude she perches Melvin on the edge of her cauldron and tells him to study the letters floating in her alphabet soup. She hopes the fumes arising from her fetid brew will overcome him until he passes out, falls into the pot, and gets cooked into quietude. Instead, the stew forms a giant purple bubble that finally pops and sends Melvin careening towards "human being land".

There (here?) the little monster gets put into a rich man's zoo where he refuses offers of help to escape because he likes the dog food he gets fed. But the truant officer from Monsterville catches up with him, and the first issue ends with them on a journey homeward.

The series ran for ten issues, and if it was only a shadow of the glory that was Lulu, it was, at least, a colorful shadow. Melvin's resemblance to Tubby Tomkins in both looks and acts is a constant reminder that adds a nimbus of nostalgia to the little monster's character. The last issue of *Melvin Monster* was published in late 1969 when Dell also closed down their *Movie Classics* series, the twilight of their comics publishing career. ■

The Strange Case of the #100!

Surprisingly–few old titles reached the century mark

By Michelle Nolan

CARE TO TAKE A GUESS HOW MANY COMIC BOOK TITLES reached 100 issues during the first 25 years of the industry's existence? It's fewer than 100!

In fact, if you have a little money–and you need not be a millionaire by any means–you can build a complete collection of early 100th issues. It will take more than a little diligence, since some of these are surprisingly obscure, but it can be done.

Why? Well, exactly 65 comic books reached the century mark between 1942 and 1959, at which point the newsstand comic book industry was 25 years old.

Ye editor's challenge in issue #39 piqued my curiosity, so I pulled out several volumes from my reference library and came up with what I believe is the first published listing of 100th issues–with more than a few traps along the way!

For if you, like me, are a purist, you'll want to know what the real 100th issue of a title is–and it's not always what it seems!

In addition to the 65 titles that reached 100 issues by the 1959 benchmark, another 53 titles that began during the 1940's and '50's reached their 100th issue sometime during the 1960's. That's 118 in all–meaning that fewer than five percent of all the more than 2,000 titles begun during the first 25 years in the history of comic books reached their 100th issue!

That's one statistic I'll bet you didn't know!

Here's another figure to ponder: How many of those 118 titles were devoted exclusively or at least primarily to stories of a single character or strip? The answer will startle you: 50. But of those first 65 titles that reached 100 issues by 1959, genuine single-character or single strip themes account for only 20 titles.

Even more interesting: The first single character-dominated comic book to reach #100 was the 26th overall to do so–*Captain Marvel Adventures* in 1949. That means it took 15 years of comic book publishing history before a single character reached his 100th issue!

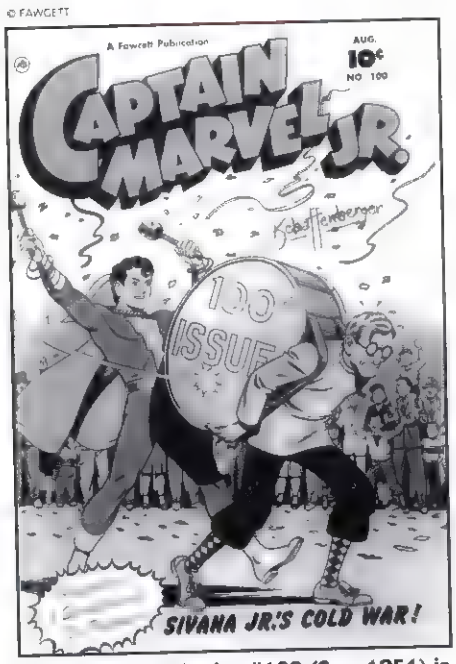
By the time *Superman* #100 appeared in 1955–the 45th title to reach 100–it was only the sixth true non-anthology comic to hit the century mark! Issue #2 was titled *Red Ryder* and #3 was *Captain Marvel Junior*. Remember, too, that several titles named after the lead character actually were anthologies for all or part of their long runs, including *Flash Comics, Blue Bolt, Shadow Comics, Airboy Comics, Daredevil* and *Boy*.

What these figures reveal is a sea of change in the reading habits and preferences of the American public, dovetailing with the origins of the comic book from newspaper strips to the form's maturity as a vehicle for stories involving original characters and/or American icons.

Or to put it another way, only four of the first 40 titles to reach 100 issues were not anthologies, but no fewer than 46 single-character titles were among the ensuing 78 titles that reached 100! And of those 32 non-character titles, they were anthologies only in the sense that they were single-theme comics, such as *Strange Adventures* or *Confessions Of The Lovelorn*. In other words, comic book publishers by and large

stopped printing genuine anthologies after the first 20 years or so of the existence of comic books.

Of the comic books originated during the 1934-59 period, the vast majority of the true anthologies–that is, comics containing the stories of several different characters–simply disappeared! Those few that remained featured a strong lead character, such as Superman in *Action Comics* or Donald Duck in *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories*. In fact, I suspect titles such as *Action* were purchased (by either kids or their parents) as a de facto Superman title. During the 1930s and '40s, readers enjoyed variety in their comic books–but how many people do you think bought *Action* for Tommy Tomorrow in the 1950's?



Captain Marvel Junior #100 (Sep 1951) is seldom seen! This was actually the 99th issue because only one issue was published to cover both #34 and 35.

All of this is by way of showing that the list of the earliest 100th issues (see accompanying charts) changed dramatically in style, content and tone from the 1940's to the 1950's and '60's! And, as a collector, you have to decide if you want to collect *all* those 100th issues, or whether you want to collect only those that feature a single character. So, you see, even within the narrow confines of collecting 100th issues, there exists a sub-speciality!

The first title to reach its 100th issue was, fittingly, the first regularly published newsstand comic book, *Famous Funnies*, with #100 in November of 1942. By the end of the 1940s, 26 titles had reached #100, capped (pun fully intended) by the aforementioned *Captain Marvel* #100 in September 1949.

The *Overstreet Price Guide* usually extends a little extra value to 100th issues, with a nod to those who collect them and thus make them at least moderately more desirable than the 99th or 101st issues. By far, the priciest 100th issue is *Flash Comics* #100 dated November 1948. It lists for $238 in "Good" and $1,900 in "Near-Mint." It's listed as "scarce" along with all of the last five issues of the original run, but I'm not sure a better term might be "unavailable" or "tough to buy" (as opposed to "tough to find," which is the same definition as "scarce.")

These late issues of the original *Flash Comics* are so pretty that they tend to become absorbed into permanent collections. In fact, all of the issues from #86 through #104 (the Black Canary issues) are highly collectible. So, if you do collect 100th issues, *Flash* #100 may present an obstacle with regard to both finances and availability.

It's also interesting to note how little hype accompanied the publishing of most of the early 100th issues. This, of course, shows how most comic book publishers considered what they were doing was producing commercial products and not collectibles. To them, #100 wasn't likely to sell much better than #99, so why make a big fuss about it?

Occasionally there would be a special cover to mark #100, such as Fawcett produced for *Captain Marvel Adventures* and *Captain Marvel Junior*. Interestingly, Fawcett also had a pretty "cutting the cake" cover for *Whiz Comics* #100 in 1948, but

CBM CHECKLIST

Chronology of early 100th Issues

This list includes all 100th issues from 1942 (the first) to 1959 (except those that radically changed format (e.g. *All-Star Western* #100 is a different genre than *All-Star* #1-57 (which became *All-Star Western*).

Famous Funnies (Nov 1942)
Popular Comics (Jun 1944)
King Comics (Aug 1944)
Tip Top Comics (Oct 1944)
More Fun Comics (Nov/Dec 1944, continued from New Fun Comics #1-6)
Detective Comics (Jun 1945)
New Funnies (Jun 1945, continued from The Funnies #1-64)
Ace Comics (Jul 1945)
Adventure Comics (Oct/Nov 1945, continued from New Comics #1-11 and New Adventure Comics #12-31)
Feature Comics (Jul 1946, continued from Feature Funnies #1 20)
Action Comics (Sep 1946)
Super Comics (Sep 1946)
Jumbo Comics (Jun 1947)
Magic Comics (Nov 1947)
Jungle Comics (Apr 1948)
All-American Comics (Aug 1948)
Flash Comics (Oct 1948)
Target Comics (Dec 1948, Vol. 9, No.10)
Whiz Comics (Dec 1948)
Wings Comics (Dec 1948)
Walt Disney's Comics & Stories (Jan 1949)
Master Comics (Feb 1949)
Big Shot Comics (Apr 1949)
Blue Bolt Comics (Jul/Aug 1949, Vol 10, No. 1)
Shadow Comics (Jul 1949, Vol 9, No. 4)
Captain Marvel Adventures (Sep 1949)
Star Spangled Comics (Jan 1950)
Looney Tunes & Merry Melodies (Feb 1950)
Police Comics (Jun 1950)
Modern Comics (Aug 1950, cont. from Military Comics #1-43)
Sensation Comics (Nov/Dec 1950)
Crime Does Not Pay (Jul 1951, continued from Silver Streak #21, actual 100th issue #121, Apr 1953)
Sparkler Comics (Jul/Aug. 1951)
Captain Marvel Junior (Sept. 1951, actual 100th issue #101, Oct. 1951)
Red Ryder (Nov 1951, actual 100th issue #101)
Airboy (Jun 1952, Vol. 9, No. 5)
Classics Illustrated (Oct 1952, continued from Classics Comics)
Paul Terry's Comics (Apr 1953, cont. from Terry Toons #1 86)
Daredevil (Jul 1953)
Pep Comics (Nov 1953)
Boy Illustories (Apr 1954, continued from Captain Battle, actual 100th issue #102, Jun 1954)
Comics on Parade (Sep 1954)
Hopalong Cassidy (Apr 1955)
Gene Autry Comics (Jun 1955)
Superman (Oct 1955)
Roy Rogers Comics (Apr 1956)

did nothing whatsoever to note the milestone on *Master Comics* #100 only two months later!

In fact, until the 100th issue of *Superman*, hitting 100 was seldom the occasion for a cover celebration except for Fawcett Publications. Rare exceptions included *Famous Funnies* #100 and *Big Shot* #100, both of which featured elaborate "cake" covers featuring all their favorite characters. Ironically, *Famous Funnies* lasted 218 issues but *Big Shot* bit the dust with #104 in 1949. *Big Shot* #100 is one of the most uncommon #100 issues, even though it's worth only a few dollars.

Interestingly, three DC titles that were on their last legs–*Flash, All-American* and *Sensation*–had little blurbs at the top saying "100th Smash Issue!" But the other five DC "Big Eight" monthly titles did not feature cover celebrations. *Action* #100 is positively dull, as you can see if you check the *Gerber Photo-Journal*. This tells you a lot about the commercial philosophy of comics in those days. They were commercial publications, not collectibles–it's just that simple!

Then, of course, there were the 100th issues that not only did nothing to call attention to it, but which collectors have had to research just to determine that they are, indeed, 100th issues! These include *Blue Bolt* #100 (Vol. 10, #1) *Shadow Comics* #100 (Vol. 9, #4) and *Airboy Comics* #100 (Vol. 9, #5).

Then there were *Superman* #100 in 1955 and *Batman* #100 in 1956, both with elaborate "celebration" covers.

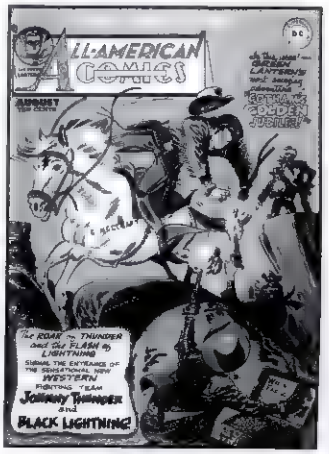
Many fans mark the origins of DC's embryonic "collector consciousness" from *Superman Annual* #1 in 1960 (the first Silver Age reprint annual), which not only reprinted old stories but also the covers of *Superman* #1 (slightly modified to take away the 64 page notation). *Superboy* #1, *Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen* #1 and *Superman's Girl Friend, Lois Lane* #1. At that point, the *Lois Lane* was only two years old and many Silver Age fans had seen it, but how many young collectors had ever seen the covers of the other three issues?

However, *Superman* #100 was actually the first DC comic book to reprint anything from the Golden Age–in this case, the covers of #1, 25, 50 and 75. *Batman* #100 replicated the covers of six old issues, without identifying any of them except #1. Interestingly, though, when *Wonder Woman* #100 came along in 1958, there was no cover acknowledgment except for the tiny lettering "Special 100th Issue" in the upper left-hand corner. No old covers were reprinted -perhaps this had something to do with the fact that by this time the long-running H.G. Peter art style had recently been abandoned–and yet Robert Kanigher came up with a full length story dealing with "Wonder Woman's 100th Anniversary!"

Incidentally, I well remember being puzzled by the cover reproduction of *Superman* #75 when I first acquired a copy of #100, lo these many, many years ago! That's because the copy of #75 I had in my collection actually had a #74 listed on the cover! That's because some copies of #75 were inadvertently listed as #74 before the mistake was corrected during the press run. This fact is duly noted for current collectors in the *Overstreet Guide*, but back in fandom's early years, this was just one of the many mysteries we had to uncover–especially when I unearthed a copy of the real *Superman* #74!

At any rate, *Superman, Batman* and *Wonder Woman* #100 signaled at least a slight acknowledgment by DC of its rich comic-book heritage. It wasn't until the early

DC began the long-running Western hero, Johnny Thunder, in All American #100 (Aug 1948). After two more issues Green Lantern was gone, and the title became All-American Western with #103.



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Blackhawk (May 1956, continued from Uncle Sam, actual 100th issue #108, Jan 1957)
Real Screen Comics (Jul 1956)
Dick Tracy (Jul 1956)
Lone Ranger (Oct 1956)
Marge's Little Lulu (Oct 1956)
Blondie (Mar 1957)
Joe Palooka (Apr 1957)
Mutt & Jeff (Jan 1958)
Tarzan (Jan 1958)
Wonder Woman (Aug 1958)
Adventures Into the Unknown (Sep 1958)
Felix the Cat (Oct 1958)
Confessions of the Lovelorn (Dec 1958)
Strange Adventures (Jan 1959)
World's Finest Comics (Mar 1959)
My Romantic Adventures (Apr 1959)
Archie (Apr 1959)
Dagwood (May 1959)
Sad Sack (Dec 1959)

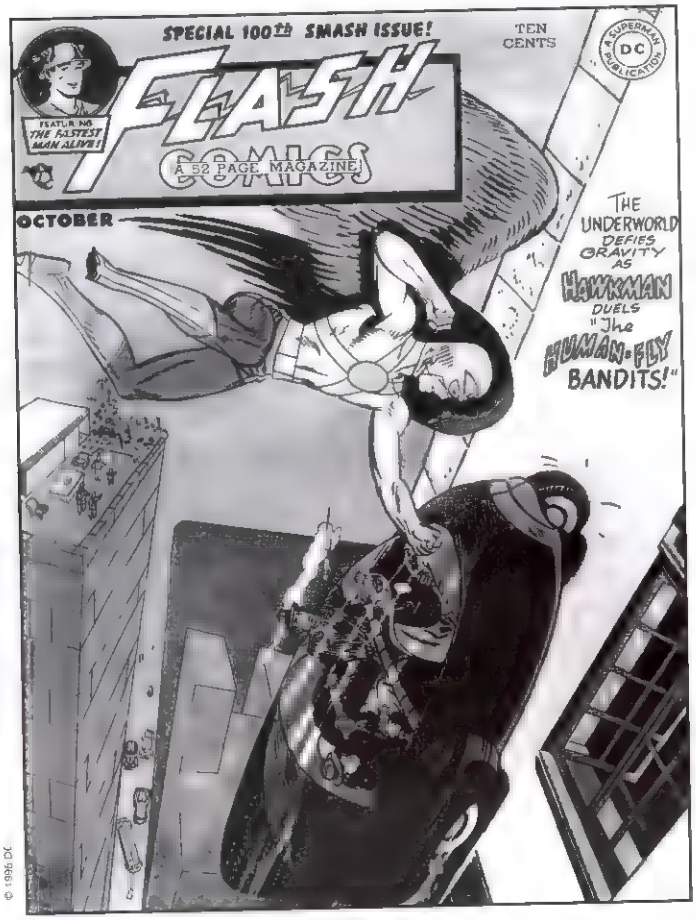
False #100s

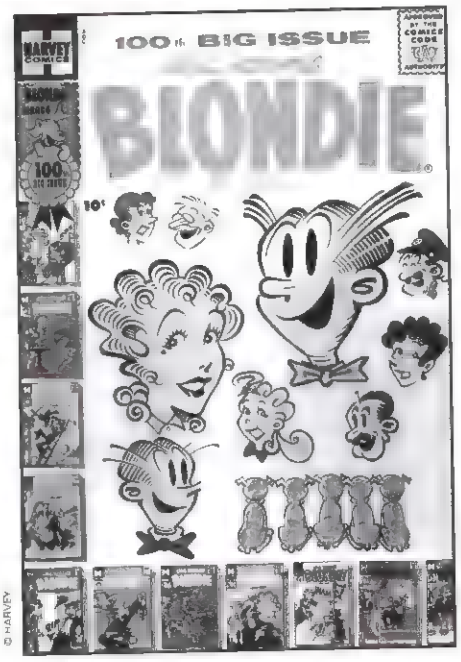
Marvel Tales #100 (Apr 1951, from Marvel Mystery #92)
All-Star Western #100 (Apr/May 1959, from All-Star #57)
Western Hero #100 (Mar 1951, from Wow Comics #69)
Prize Western #100 (Jul/Aug 1953, from Prize Comics #68)
Sweethearts #100 (Jun 1951, from Captain Midnight #67)
Buck Rogers #100 (Jan 1951, first Toby issue)
Lil' Tomboy #100 (Aug1958, from Funny Animals #91)
Tee Pee Tim #100 (Feb/Mar 1955, from Ha Ha #99)
Spencer Spook #100 (Mar/Apr 1955, from Giggle #99)

Comics titles begun in the late 1940s and '50s that reached 100 issues in the 1960s or '70s

1945: Mille the Model, Patsy Walker
1948: Kid Colt, Two Gun Kid, Popeye
1949: Archie's Pal Jughead, Girls' Love Stories, Secret Hearts, Superboy, Romantic Story
1950: Tomahawk, Girls' Romance, Adventures of Bob Hope, Archie's Girls Betty & Veronica
1951 Forbidden Worlds, Fox & The Crow, House of Mystery, Mystery in Space, Strange Tales, Hot Rods & Racing Cars
1952: Adventures Of Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis, All-American Men of War, Bugs Bunny, Donald Duck, Our Army at War, Star Spangled War Stories, Uncle Scrooge, Woody Woodpecker, Archie's Pals 'N Gals, G.I. Combat
1953: Archie's Joke Book, Beetle Bailey, Dennis the Menace, Daffy, Little Dot, Mickey Mouse
1954: Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen, Our Fighting Forces
1955: Falling In Love, Little Lotta, Brave & The Bold
1956: House of Secrets, Showcase, Little Archie, Tales of the Unexpected
1957: Hot Stuff, Sad Sack & The Sarge
1958: Life with Archie, Superman's Girlfriend Lois Lane, Friendly Ghost Casper, Love Diary
1959: The Flash

1960's–and the emergence of fans like Jerry Bails and Roy Thomas–that DC would begin to take any real advantage of that heritage.





Blondie #100 (Mar 1957) Harvey Comics actually took over Blondie with #16, but that didn't stop Harvey from celebrating #100. The first 15 issues were published by David McKay Company.

Flash Comics #100 (Nov 1948) This is the most valuable of all 100th issues! Other than the little blurb at the top, there was no celebration for one of DC's flagship titles, which was to last only four more issues in its original run.

By the way, DC, as might be expected, was the only company with a substantial number of 100th issues by 1950. These included *More Fun, Detective, Adventure, Action, All-American, Flash, Star Spangled* and *Sensation*–"The Big Eight" of all those fabulous 1940's DC house ads–all by 1950, giving DC eight of the first 31 titles to reach 100. There followed *Superman* and *Batman*–and, of all things, the funny animal anthology *Real Screen Comics*! It's no wonder *The Fox And The Crow* are so fondly remembered by so many collectors. Apparently they were hot sellers!

It's also interesting to note DC's business acumen in picking up *Hopalong Cassidy* from Fawcett in 1954 (Hoppy's 15th DC issue was #100 overall) and in purchasing *Blackhawk* after Quality folded in 1956 (the first DC issue, *Blackhawk* #108 in January 1957, was actually the 100th issue because the first issue was #9 in the Winter of 1944-45, continuing the numbering from *Uncle Sam* #8).

And that quirk of the *Blackhawk* series leads us to the topic of #100 issues that aren't really #100. There are two types–comics that actually did later reach 100 issues, and comics that were continued from another title (and a few of both!) And you thought this was simple!

If you want *Crime Does Not Pay* #100, for example, you need to collect the nominal #100 (July 1951) and the actual 100th issue (#121, April 1953). This is because the first issue was #22, continuing the numbering from *Silver Streak* #21. Other actual 100th issues are *Red Ryder* #101 (#2 was entitled *Hi-Spot*); *Captain Marvel Junior* #101 (the contents to #34 were bound with the cover marked #35, meaning there is only one issue to account for those two numbers); *Airboy* #101 (there was no Vol. 3, #3 issue) and *Boy Illustories* #102 (the first two issues were entitled *Captain Battle*).

All 26 of the 1940's 100th issues are genuine (although some, like *More Fun*, changed format, going from non-super hero anthology to super hero anthology). But there are at least nine *faux #100's* from the 1950s–comics that never reached 100 in their own right, but were published with a "No. 100" on the cover and in the indicia.

These include *Marvel Tales* #100 (continued from *Marvel Mystery* #93), *All-Star Western* #100 (continued from *All-Star Comics* #57), *Western Hero* #100 (continued from *Wow* #69), *Prize Western* #100 (continued from *Prize* #68), *Sweethearts* #100 (continued from *Captain Midnight* #67), *Buck Rogers* #100 (an outrageous hype by Toby, actually the first issue and continued from Eastern's six issues of the early 1940's), *Lil' Tomboy* #100 (continued from *Funny Animals* #91), *Teepee Tim* #100 (continued from *Ha Ha* #99) and *Spencer Spook* #100 (continued from *Giggle* #99). By the way, *Nancy & Sluggo* #100 is actually still *Comics On Parade* #100 (September 1954).

I'll leave it to someone else to chronicle the 100th issues of the 1960's on up. In the meantime, let's hope we can celebrate another special 100 come the year 2001–*CBM* #100! ■

In 1964, the baby boom rediscovery of fantastic heroes, the Silver Age, was underway. In 1964, Tarzan, perhaps the greatest fantastic hero of them all, certainly a giant figure in the American myth structure, came to comic books in original stories carrying the spirit intended by the character's creator, for the first time. It had taken 52 years. Tarzan was ideal for the comic media and found his way into them almost from their inception. In fact, an entire genre of comic strip and comic book fantasy worlds developed based on the basic precepts established by Edgar Rice Burroughs in Tarzan of the Apes and other stories that followed.

Tarzan Of The Apes #207 (April 1972) A great cover by Joe Kubert graces this first issue of D.C.'s Tarzan.

Tarzan first appeared in comic book form in 1929 when Grosset and Dunlap published an 80-page hardcover collection of newspaper strip reprints from the Tarzan series that had debuted that year. From this point on, Tarzan and other characters created by Burroughs were almost constantly featured in American comic books. The newspaper strip origins of Tarzan comics proved more of a curse than a blessing to the comic book treatment of the character. All through the Golden Age, Tarzan comics were devoted exclusively to reprints of the newspaper strips. And, while these strips were often excellent examples of the genre, they did not always lend themselves ideally to the comic book format, nor could they be anything more than reprints.

The Dell & Gold Key Tarzan

Eighteen years after Tarzan first appeared in comic book form, Western Publishing, under their Dell imprint, published the first original Tarzan comic book story. Jesse Marsh drew and Gaylord Dubois wrote "Tarzan and the Devil Ogre" (*Four Color* #134, February 1947). Enjoying moderate success with the character, Dell employed the same creative team on "Tarzan and the Fires of Tohr" (*Four Color* #161, August 1947). Dell granted Tarzan his own continuing comic book early in the next year (#1 January/February 1948).

Dell began to develop their own "Jungle World." By the late-1940s, Tarzan was so well known that little attention had to be given to the novels. Dubois' stories attempted to meld the original ape-man and the newspaper strip character with the then-popular motion-picture version of Tarzan.

edly written by Gaylord Dubois, *Korak, Son Of Tarzan* awakened comic fans to the potential of long-dormant characters and began the return to Burroughs' roots. Gold Key's abandonment of Boy was a rather radical move for the company, but the flagship Burroughs' title, *Tarzan*, sporting the Gold Key imprint since #132, remained unchanged.

Russ Manning met and was befriended by Jesse Marsh after leaving military service in 1953, and introduced to Western Publishing. A former student of Los Angeles Art Institute and the New York School of Visual Arts, Manning was well-recommended to the Dell art staff. There he produced a great deal of artwork for many titles including *Sea Hunt, Wyatt Earp, Brothers Of The Spear, Magnus Robot Fighter,* and others. Manning's introduction to Tarzan came in 1954 when he produced a Tarzan issue for *March Of Comics* (#114), and a back-up feature for *Tarzan* in #63.

arzan... the Comic Books!

By Matthew Gore

In *Tarzan* #20 (March/April 1951) Marsh and Dubois mapped the Jungle World, largely ignoring the map created by Burroughs. Left alone by Burroughs' Inc., Western saw no reason to improve or modify the *Tarzan* comics bearing their Dell banner despite eventual mediocrity and slipping sales.

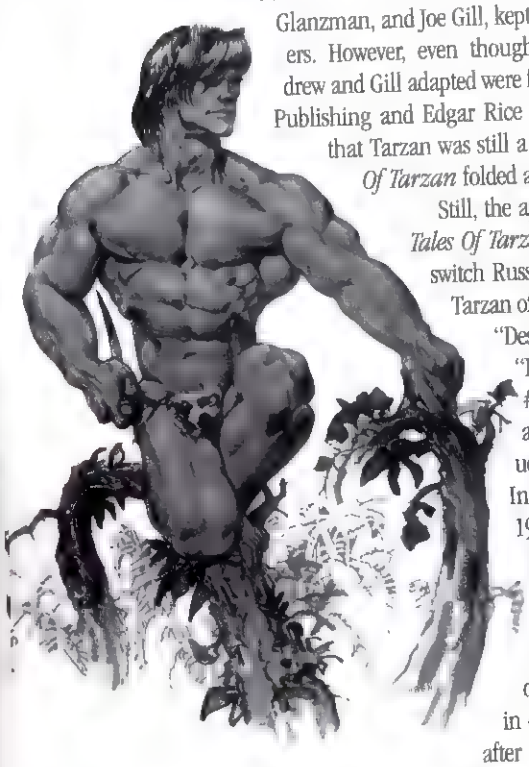
Tarzan met the Silver Age in 1964. Actually, the first Silver Age treatment of a Burroughs character came with the first issue of Gold Key's *Korak, Son Of Tarzan* in January, 1964. Drawn by Russ Manning, the first of the great Tarzan artists to originate material specifically for comic books, and reput-

The Charlton Tarzan

Manning continued to produce Tarzan material as fill-ins and back-ups until Korak's debut in 1964. It was not Gold Key, however, that brought Tarzan into the Silver Age. Charlton Comics issued *Jungle Tales Of Tarzan* #1 in December 1964. (Charlton's Tarzan effort, edited by Pat Masulli and based on three stories, "Capture of Tarzan", "The Fight for the Balu", and "Tarzan's Way of Life", which was allowed to slip into the public domain, shook Gold Key.) In Charlton's first issue, Masulli stated, "the true flavor of

Tarzan as created by Mr. Burroughs has rarely been tasted in comic books. We intend to change that. We intend to be as true to the original as possible. We pledge ourselves to a series of comics that will thrill and inspire, delight and entrance as did the original masterworks."

Jungle Tales Of Tarzan reportedly sold well enough to justify its continued existence. The creative team of Masulli, Sam Glanzman, and Joe Gill, kept their pledge to the readers. However, even though the stories Glanzman drew and Gill adapted were free of copyright, Western Publishing and Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., argued that Tarzan was still a trademark. *Jungle Tales Of Tarzan* folded after only four issues.



Burroughs Bulletin #34 (February 1974) Tarzan Meets La by Richard Corben, a fairly uncommon Tarzan item. Not many people know that this mag ran comic stories, and this one is a great example.

Still, the apparent success of *Jungle Tales Of Tarzan* prompted Gold Key to switch Russ Manning from Korak to Tarzan of the Apes–with two stories "Descent into the Past" and "Fury of Gayat" in issue #154 (November 1965)–although Manning continued to contribute to *Korak*. In issue #155 (December 1965), Manning turned his genius to an adaptation of Burroughs' original novel, "Tarzan of the Apes." At last, the potential of the character was realized in comic book form, 36 years after Tarzan first touched the medium. These comics, still largely ignored by many collectors, are quite inexpensive.

Although Gold Key's Tarzan was still written by Dubois, Burroughs' original stories came to dominate the comic. The combination of Manning's art and Burroughs' story gave credibility to Gold Key's title, led to praise from critics and fans, and, presumably, increased sales. A series of graphic adaptations of Burroughs' novels followed "Tarzan of the Apes." Most were serialized, generally over two issues. After the Tarzan television series debuted on NBC, on September 8, 1966, Gold Key used photo covers of Ron Ely, TV's Tarzan, on every other issue.

In December 1967, the acclaim that had greeted Manning's Tarzan prompted Burroughs, Inc., to offer the daily newspaper strip to Manning, which he accepted. Unfortunately, this eventually brought his run on the Gold Key *Tarzan* comic to a close. Again, Manning's efforts of the Tarzan daily were critically successful. In January 1968, ERB, Inc. gave the Sunday Tarzan page to Manning as well. Still, Manning's art did not save the strips from commercial failure. As one critic noted, "jungle stories were tied to a mindset that, by the seventies, seemed very dated."

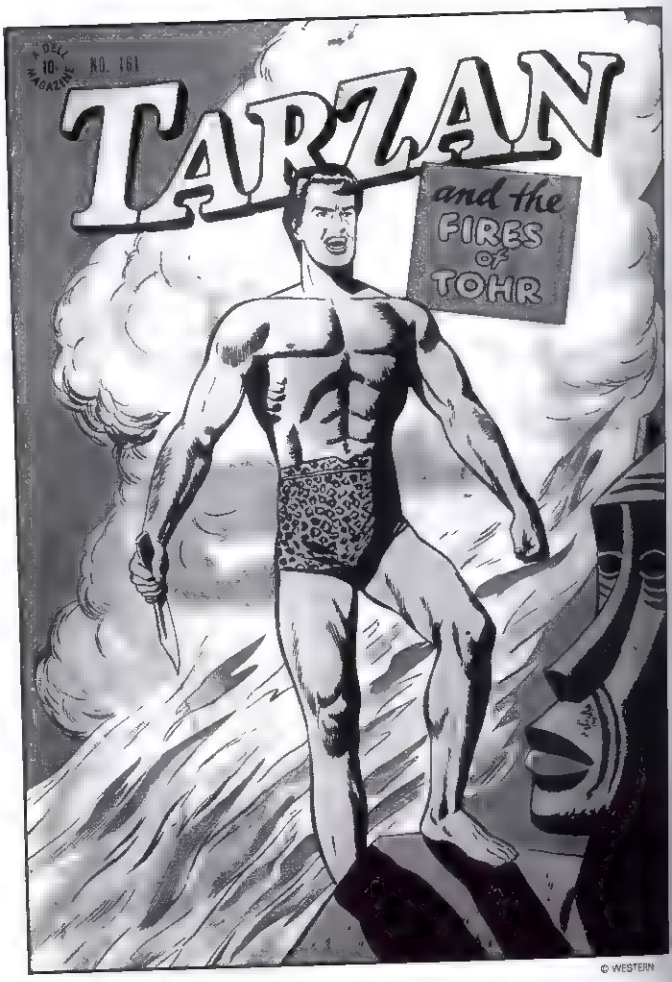
The popularity of Gold Key's *Tarzan* declined greatly by the early 1970s. After Manning left Western, a number of artists supplied Tarzan and Korak. Unfortunately, Gold Key's stories were seldom credited or signed… but it is thought that Dubois continued to write both features. Some artists known to have contributed to these include Gray Morrow (who followed Manning to the Sunday newspaper strip), Mike Royer, Doug Wildey, and Warren Tufts. Poor sales of the *Tarzan* comic books prompted Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., to reconsider, and then dropped their contract with Western when it expired.

The DC Tarzan

Then National Periodical Publishing gained the Burroughs license for DC Comics. Besides Tarzan and Korak, DC acquired comic book rights for all of Burroughs' literary properties and began the most ambitious comic book treatment of Burroughs' work to date. *Tarzan* and *Korak* would now continue from the Gold Key titles under the DC banner!

DC's *Tarzan* began with issue #207 (April 1972) and *Korak* followed with #46 (June 1972). Both titles acquired new Burroughs back-up features. A third title, Edgar Rice Burroughs title, *Weird Worlds*, debuted with an August, 1972, first issue. *Korak* was eventually retitled *Tarzan Family* with #60 (December 1975).

Joe Kubert as artist, writer, and editor dominated DC's venture into the worlds of Burroughs. Trained at New York City's High School of Music and Art, Kubert entered the comic field as a teenager working for the Chesler shop in 1939. By the 1970s, Kubert was the consummate comic book man having

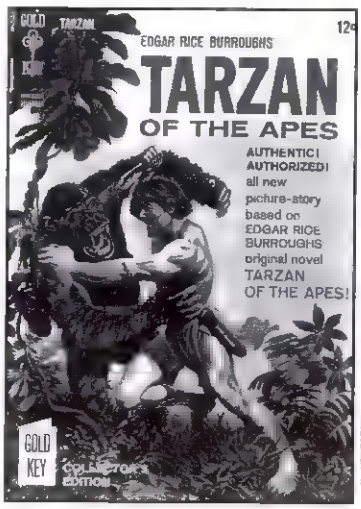


Four Color #161 (Aug 1947) This second "try-out" issue from Dell featured cover and art by Jesse Marsh, who drew the series for many years.

worked for MLJ, Holyoke, Fiction House, Quality, Harvey, Interfaith, Avon, St. John, EC, Timely, Atlas, Lev Gleason, Will Eisner, and DC. His experience at St. John allowed him to create his own jungle man, Tor, whom he revived for DC in the 1970s.

Kubert, Tarzan's fourth great comic artist, provided the majority of covers for both *Tarzan* and *Korak* and the cover for the first issue of *Weird Worlds*. He also wrote or adapted stories for Tarzan while drawing the feature. Kubert worked with DC editorial assistant Allan Asherman who provided many fac tual text features. Both Tarzan and Korak reclaimed their Burroughs roots under Kubert's guidance. Korak's wife, Meriem, was introduced as a dominant part of the plot line in that series.

In the pages of DC's *Tarzan*, Kubert adapted a number of Burroughs' novels and stories to comic book form. These adaptations included "Tarzan of the Apes" as "Origin of the Ape Man" (*Tarzan* #207-#210), "Return of Tarzan" (*Tarzan* #219-#223), "Tarzan and the Lion Man" (*Tarzan* #231-234), "Tarzan and the Castaways" (*Tarzan* #240 243, finished art by Franc Reyes, Nestor Redondo, and Rudy Florese), "Jungle Murders" (*Tarzan* #245-246, finished art by Nestor Redondo), and "Tarzan and the Champion" (*Tarzan* #248-249, finished art by Rudy Florese).



Tarzan Of The Apes #155 (Dec 1965) This is the second full issue of Tarzan by Russ Manning and has his adaptation of Tarzan's origin- going back to his Burroughs' roots for the first time in the Dell/Gold Key run.

Kubert also adapted several of the stories from *Jungle Tales Of Tarzan*, "Captive", "Balu of the Great Apes", and "Nightmare", in issues #212-214, respectively. After Kubert severed his association with Tarzan, one more novel ("Tarzan the Untamed") was adapted (*Tarzan* #250-256) by Gerry Conway (#250-254), Denny O'Neil (#255-256), and Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez.

In the pages of *Korak*, DC had no Burroughs' originals to adapt. Still, the Korak stories written by Len Wein, Joe Kubert, Robert Kanigher, and Tony Isabella were true to tradition incorporating characters and locations from Burroughs' Tarzan stories. As a DC character, Korak left a trail of 27 chapters through several comic titles beginning with *Korak* #46-#59, continuing in *Tarzan* #230-234 (all giant-sized issues), and concluding as the lead feature in *Tarzan Family* #60-66. The artists on the feature were Frank Thorne (*Korak* #46-51), Murphy Anderson (*Korak* #52-56), Rudy Florese (*Korak* #57-#59, *Tarzan Family* #60-64), James Sherman (*Tarzan Family* #65-66), Joe Kubert (*Tarzan* #230), Russ Heath (*Tarzan* #230), and Alex Nino (*Tarzan* #231-234).

DC made use of a number of other Burroughs' creations as both back-up stories in their two primary titles and in *Weird Worlds*. John Carter of Mars appeared in three titles, *Tarzan, Weird Worlds,* and *Tarzan Family*. Marv Wolfman adapted Burroughs' novel "A Princess of Mars" in five chapters that appeared in *Tarzan* #207-#209 and *Weird Worlds* #1-#2. Murphy Anderson penciled four chapters and Gray Morrow penciled one. Wolfman also adapted "Gods of Mars" in five chapters that appeared in *Weird Worlds*

CBM CHECKLIST

Edgar Rice Burroughs Comic Book Chronology

1929: The Illustrated Tarzan Book (Grosset & Dunlap), 80 pages, 7"x9", hardcover, dust-jacket, 50¢. Reprints Harold Foster's first daily comic strips.

1934: Tarzan of the Apes #1 (Metropolitan Newspaper Service), hardcover, 68 pages, 4"x12", strip reprints.

The Illustrated Tarzan Book (Grosset & Dunlap), hardcover, second printing, 76 pages, 7"x9", 25¢.

1936: Tip Top Comics #1 (Apr 1936) - #188 (Sep 1954), United Features Syndicate #1-187; St. John #188. Tarzan strip reprints appear in #1-64, 66, 71, 75, 76, 79-131, 133-188. Tarzan covers appear on #1-3, 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 32-34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 50, 52. Tip Top #7 features a biography of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

1938: Comics On Parade #1 (Apr 1938) - #29 (Aug 1940), United Features Syndicate. Strip reprints.

Famous Feature Stories #1 (1938), Dell Comics, 68 pages, 7"x11". 6 pg Tarzan text story with illustrations by Juanita Bennett.

The Funnies #30 (Apr 1938) - #56 (Jul 1941), Dell Comics. John Carter of Mars begins by an anonymous artist. Art on feature is taken over by John Coleman Burroughs in #34. This adaptation predates the John Carter newpaper strip and is the first Burroughs story to be adapted as an original comic book series.

1939: Popular Comics #38 (Apr 1939) - #43 (Sep 1939), Dell Comics. Three page Tarzan text stories with spot illustrations only. These adapt "Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle". This feature moves to Crackajack Funnies.

Crackajack Funnies #15 (Sep 1939) - #46 (Jun 1941), Dell Comics. Three page Tarzan text stories with spot illustrations only. These adapt "Tarzan and the City of Gold" in #15 25, 27-29. Issues #30-34, and 36 also have this feature.

Large Feature Comic #5 (1939, Series I) Dell Comics. Bound in color cardboard covers, 8"x11 3/8", 76 pages, black and white. Harold Foster Tarzan reprints from 1929, with additional art including splash pages by Juanita Bennett. First full comic devoted to Tarzan in the comic book format.

1940: Hi-Spot Comics #2 (Nov 1940), Hawley Publications. David Innes of Pellucidar by Edgar Rice Burroughs and art by John Coleman Burroughs. Second Burroughs story to be adapted as original comic book series.

Single Series #20 (1940) United Features Syndicate. 68 pages, 64 pages are Harold Foster Sunday Page newspaper reprints from 1932-1933.

1941: Sparkler Comics #1 (Jul 1941) - #92 (Mar 1950), second series, United Features Syndicate. Issues #1-86, 90-92 reportedly all have Burne Hogarth Tarzan strip reprints. Issues #14, 21, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 39, 47, 50, 53 all have Tarzan covers by Hogarth. Issues #44 and #83 have Tarzan covers by other artists.

circa 1944: Jeep Comics #1-29 (mid-1940s) R. B. Leffingwell & Company), U.S. Armed Forces giveaways. Tarzan strip reprints.

1946: Sport Stars #1 (Feb/Mar 1946), Parent's Magazine Institute, "How Tarzan Got That Way," Johnny Weissmuller biography.

1947: Four Color #134 (Feb 1947), Dell Comics. "Tarzan and the Devil Ogre", First original comic book Tarzan story with cover and art by Jesse Marsh.

Four Color #161 (Aug 1947), Dell Comics. "Tarzan and the Fires of Tohr", second original comic book Tarzan story with cover and art by Jesse Marsh.

1948: Tarzan #1 (Jan/Feb 1948) - #131 (Jul/Aug 1962), Dell Comics. First original comic book Tarzan series. #1-7 have covers by Marsh, #8-12 have covers by Gollub. Photo covers, primarily featuring Lex Barker, begin with #13. Marsh drew most issues with Gaylord Dubois providing scripts. However, in the 1960s, replacement artists drawing in Marsh's style become more frequent. #63 features Russ Manning art on one of the Tarzan stories, perhaps his first on the character. This title continues under the Gold Key imprint.

1952: Four Color #375 (Feb 1952), #437 (Nov 1952), #488 (Aug 1953) featuring John Carter of Mars (Dell Comics). All have Marsh art.

March Of Comics #82 (1952) - #366 (1972), Dell Comics. Beginning with issue #82 in 1952, March of Comics presented one Tarzan issue each year until Western Publishing lost the rights to the character in 1972. Issues with Tarzan are: #82 (1952) Lex Barker photo cover; #98 (1953) Lex Barker photo cover; #114 (1954) 1st Russ Manning art on Tarzan?; #125 (1955) Lex Barker photo cover; #144 (1956) Russ Manning art; #155 (1957) Photo cover; #172 (1958), 185 (1959) Photo cover; #204 (1960); #223 (1961); #240 (1962); #252 (1963); #262 (1964); #272 (1965); #286 (1966); #300 (1967); #318 (1968); #332 (1969); #342 (1970); #354 (1971); and #366 (1972).

Tarzan's Jungle Annual #1 (Aug 1952) - #7 (Sep 1958), Dell Comics. Each yearly issue was a 100 page Dell Giant. Reportedly, there were two different number fives issued in about 1956.

1959: Dell Giant #25 (Nov 1959) "Tarzan's Jungle World" with Jesse Marsh art

1960 : Dell Giant #37 (Nov 1960) and #51 (Nov 1961), Dell Comics. "Tarzan, King of the Jungle" both have Jesse Marsh art.

1962: Tarzan #132 (Nov 1962) - #137 (Oct 1963) Gold Key. Continuation of the Dell Comics series, Jesse Marsh or Marsh style art in all issues. Title continues as Tarzan of the Apes.

1963: Tarzan of the Apes #138 (Nov 1963) - #206 (Feb 1972), Gold Key. Continuation of Gold Key's Tarzan. Jesse Marsh or Marsh style art #138-153. First Russ Manning art on Tarzan series #154. Manning art #154-161, 163, 164, 166, 167, 179-177, reprints #178, 202. Doug Wildey art #162, 179-187. Other artists include Mal Keefer, Paul Norris, and Mike Royer. #162, 165, 168, 171 have Ron Ely photo covers. First Korak, Son of Tarzan #139 December 1963. #155 origin of Tarzan.

1964: Korak, Son Of Tarzan #1 (Jan 1964) - #45 (Jan 1972), Gold Key). Russ Manning art #1-11, 21. Warren Tufts art #12-13.

John Carter Of Mars #1 (Apr 1964) - #3 (Oct 1964), Gold Key. #3-#7. Sal Amendola was the primary penciler for "Gods."

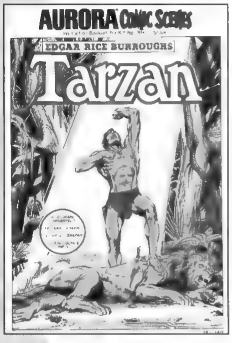
Another Burroughs space adventurer, Carson of Venus, appeared as a back-up feature in *Korak*. "Pirates of Venus", serialized in eight chapters, began in *Korak* #46 and concluded in #53. All eight chapters were drawn by Michael Kaluta who also wrote the last two. Len Wein wrote the first six chapters

Artist Alan Weiss and writer Len Wein adapted one of Burroughs' Pellucidar novels, "At the Earth's Core", into four chapters. "World Within" appeared in *Korak* #46 and "Arena of Sudden Death", "Slaves of the Mahars", and "Temple of the Damned" were featured in *Weird Worlds* #1-#3. Four more Pellucidar stories, all written by Denny O'Neil, appeared in *Weird Worlds* #4-#7.

Marv Wolfman adapted Burroughs' novel "Beyond the Farthest Star" into six chapters which ran in *Tarzan* #213-#218. Dan Green drew the first three chapters, Howard Chaykin drew the fourth, and Murphy Anderson drew the final two.

As well as their six original Burroughs features, DC also used reprint material in their titles. Most of them were from the newspaper strips by Russ Manning but several stories by Hal Foster were also used. However, none of the DC titles were commercially successful.

Weird Worlds abandoned all Burroughs characters after #7 (August-September 1973) and *Korak* was renamed *Tarzan Family* with #60 (December 1975). *Tarzan Family* lasted for seven issues and was cancelled after #66 (December 1976). *Tarzan*, the last DC Burroughs title to fail, was cancelled after issue #258 (February 1977).



Aurora Comic Scenes #181–140 (1974) Aurora produced these comics to complement the model assembly instructions. This one has a cover and six pages art by Neal Adams.

The Marvel Tarzan

After DC abandoned Burroughs, Marvel Comics captured the contract. Marvel introduced two titles, *Tarzan* and *John Carter, Warlord Of Mars* in June 1977. Both titles ran for 28 issues and three annuals before being cancelled with their October 1979 issues. John Buscema's treatment of Tarzan in the first eighteen issues of Marvel's title was competent, if hardly inspired. The first issues retold Tarzan's origin. On the other hand, Marv Wolfman wrote better than average tales for the *John Carter* series which included art by Gil Kane, Chris Claremont, Walter Simonson, and Frank Miller. Of particular interest in the John Carter run is the twelve issue original epic, "Master Assassin of Mars", featured in issues #16-#27.

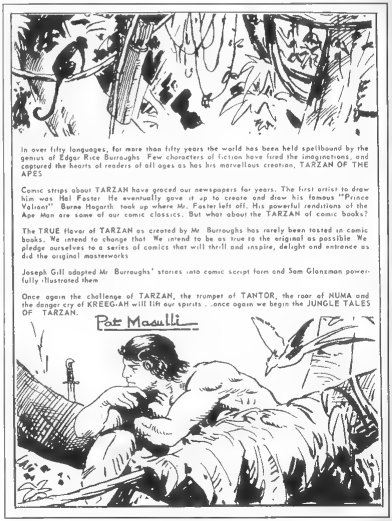
Marvel, like DC, had less success with their Burroughs titles than they had hoped. Still, four years after their two titles were cancelled, Marvel devoted an issue of *Marvel Super Special* to another adaptation of Tarzan's origin, written by Sharman DiVono and Mark Evanier and drawn by Dan Spiegle. Marvel reprinted this story as two issues of *Tarzan*

of the Apes, cover dated July and August 1984.

After August 1984, almost eight years passed without an American comic book treatment of any Burroughs' characters. Then, in March 1992, Malibu Comics debuted *Tarzan The Warrior*, which was faithful to Burroughs' original concept and ran for five issues. Malibu followed with *Tarzan: Love Lies and the Lost City* in August 1992 which concluded with issue #3. Finally, in November 1992, *Tarzan: The Beckoning* appeared from Malibu and ran for six issues.

In January 1995, Dark Horse Comics premiered their first treatment of a Burroughs' character from their recently captured license. *Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan the Lost Adventure* was a delightful attempt to return Burroughs' writings to their roots.

Dark Horse presented an unpublished Burroughs' novella, fleshed out by writer Joe R. Lansdale and illustrated by Arthur Suydam and Tom Yeates, in pulp magazine format. Other titles from Dark Horse include a four issue treatment titled *Tarzan vs. Predator at the Earth's Core* written by Walter Simonson with Lee Weeks art, *Tarzan: Mogambi* a one-shot written by Darko Macan and illustrated by Igor Korde, and a four-issue series titled *Tarzan and John Carter of Mars* written by Bruce Jones and drawn by Bret Blevins. ■


In over fifty languages, for more than fifty years the world has been held spellbound by the genius of Edgar Rice Burroughs. Few characters of fiction have fired the imaginations, and captured the hearts of readers of all ages as has his marvellous creation, TARZAN OF THE APES
Comic strips about TARZAN have graced our newspapers for years. The first artist to draw him was Hal Foster. He eventually gave it up to create and draw his famous "Prince Valiant" Burne Hogarth took up where Mr. Foster left off. His powerful renditions of the Ape Man are some of our comic classics. But what about the TARZAN of comic books?
The TRUE flavor of TARZAN as created by Mr. Burroughs has rarely been tasted in comic books. We intend to change that. We intend to be as true to the original as possible. We pledge ourselves to a series of comics that will thrill and inspire, delight and entrance as did the original masterworks
Joseph Gill adapted Mr. Burroughs' stories into comic script form and Sam Glanzman powerfully illustrated them
Once again the challenge of TARZAN, the trumpet of TANTOR, the roar of NUMA and the danger cry of KREEG-AH will fill our spirits . . once again we begin the JUNGLE TALES OF TARZAN.
Pat Masulli

Pat Masulli's editorial from the inside front cover of Charlton Comics' Jungle Tales of Tarzan #1 (Dec 1964) as illustrated by Sam Glanzman.

Reprints the Dell Four-Color issues.

Jungle Tales of Tarzan #1 (Dec 1964) - #4 (Jul 1965) Charlton Comics. #1-3 have Glanzman art, #4 is by Montes/Bache.

1965: Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle #1 (Sep 1965), Gold Key. Giant issue with newsprint "self" cover. Jesse Marsh reprints.

1967: Tarzan of the Apes #1 (Jul 1967), Top Comics/Gold Key. Reprints Gold Key's Tarzan of the Apes #169.

1967 The Illustrated Tarzan Book (Burroughs Bibliophile #2), 7"x9", $5. Reprints the 1929 edition.

1969: Golden Comics Digest #4 (1969) and #9 (1970), Gold Key. Both are 168 page digest sized issues of Manning and Marsh Tarzan reprints.

1970: Tarzan Story Digest #1 (Jun 1970), Gold Key. Gold Key Tarzan reprints.

1972: Tarzan #207 (Apr 1972) - #258 (Feb 1977), DC. First Joe Kubert art on Tarzan. Continuation of Gold Key's Tarzan of the Apes.

Korak, Son of Tarzan #46 (Jun 1972) - #56 (Mar 1974), #57 (Jun 1975)- #59 (Oct 1975), DC. Continuation of Gold Key's Korak, Son of Tarzan. Continues as DC's Tarzan Family

Tarzan Comic Digest #1 (Fall 1972), DC. Kubert cover art, Manning interior art.

Weird Worlds #1 (Aug/Sep 1972) - #7, DC. All issues feature original John Carter, Warlord of Mars, and Pellucidar stories.

1973: DC 100 Page Super Spectacular #DC-19 (Aug 1973) DC. All reprints of Manning's Tarzan strips.

Limited Collector's Edition #C-22 (1973) and #C-29 (1974) DC. C-22 reprints the origin of Tarzan from #207-210 of the DC series. C-29 reprints "Return of Tarzan" from the DC series.

1974: Aurora Comic Scenes Instruction Booklet-Tarzan #181-140 (1974) Aurora Plastics Co.. Printed on high quality stock, 8 pages, 6" x 9 3/4", Neal Adams' art. Comic was provided with the Tarzan model kit from Aurora and also has instructions for assembly of the model.

1975: Marvel Movie Premiere #1 (Sep 1975) Marvel Comics. Black and white magazine adapts the film based on Burrough's "Land that Time Forgot "

Tarzan Family #60 (Dec 1975) - #66 (Dec 1976) DC. Title continued from DC's Korak, Son of Tarzan. Other Burroughs' characters featured include Carson of Venus and John Carter of Mars as well as some Pellucidar stories.

1977: John Carter, Warlord of Mars #1 (Jun 1977)- #28 (Oct 1979), Annual #1 (1977) - #3 (1979), Marvel Comics. Issues #1-10 and Annual #1 feature covers and art by Gil Kane. Walter Simonson drew #15 and Frank Miller #18. #16-27 feature the epic "Master Assassin of Mars" written by Marv Wolfman and drawn (mostly) by Chris Claremont.

Tarzan #1 (Jun 1977) - #28 (Oct 1979), Annual #1 (1977)- #3 (1979), Marvel Comics. Issues #1-18 have art by John Buscema.

(More Tarzan was published in the 1980s and 1990s, but those are beyond the scope of CBM's coverage.) ■

A CBM INTERVIEW WITH

JOE KUBERT

Steve Ringgenberg: *You've had a long career in comics and entered the business in a rather unorthodox way. Would you mind telling that story?*

Joe Kubert: I sold my first commercial piece of work when I was about eleven and a half or twelve years old. You describe it as being unorthodox, but it really wasn't. Perhaps it was unusual for someone that young, but there were actually a lot of young guys that were breaking in at that time. . at the age of 15 or 16 or 17. In fact many of these younger artists were already well ensconced in positions… either in internship or just trying to break into the business. In any event, I guess I was quite young.

SR: *I have read that you started working with the Harry Chesler shop.*

JK: That's right. Harry Chesler was a kind of a "dinosaur" from the Chicago advertising world. He came to New York and decided to get into the publishing business… his procedure were to get a shop together, that is to hire a batch of artists and writers and letterers, and all of those people necessary to put the creative end or the editorial end of comic books together, and market them or package them for any publisher who wanted the work.

Harry sold books on humor, westerns, superheroes whatever the particular publisher wanted. Harry was able to put it together to the point where he even included getting the plates and everything else all set to go to the printers

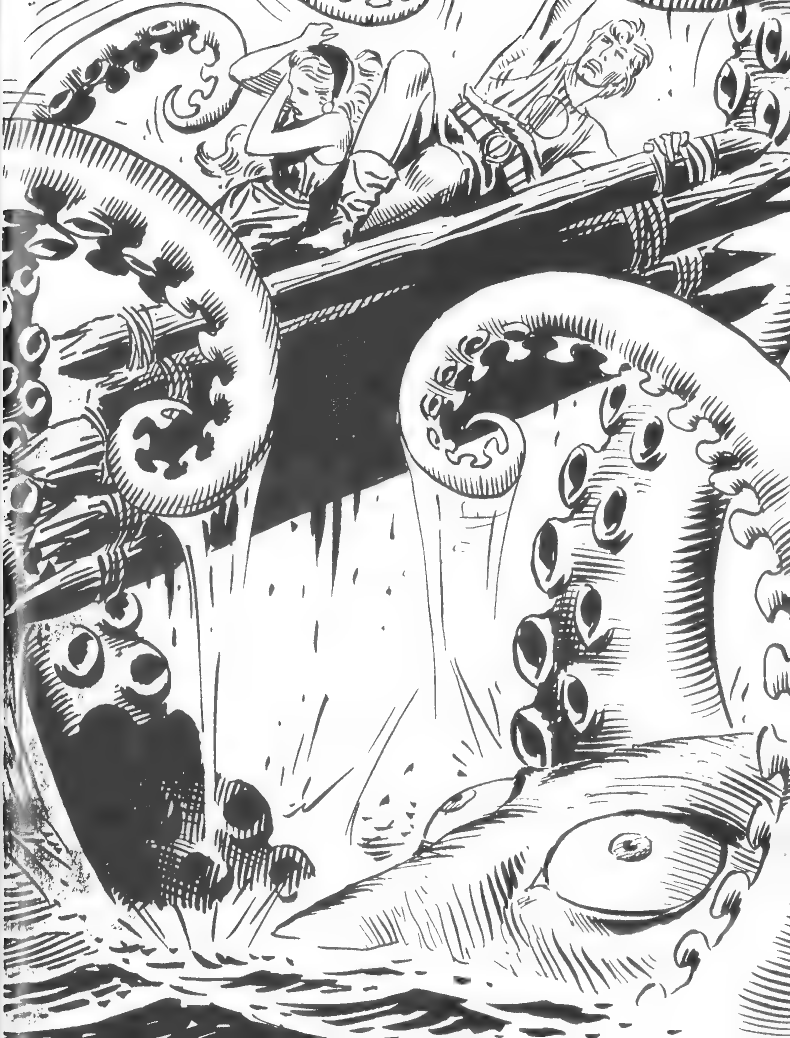
This enabled so-called "publishers" to be able to operate out of a room the size of a closet, because they didn't need to do or have anything, or really handle any business .. other than to make a deal with Harry. Harry would literally provide them with all the material necessary to put out a comic book

SR: *How did you meet Harry Chesler?*

JK: (*Laughs*) I had just started attending the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan and living in Brooklyn. At the time, Harry's place was on Twenty third street in New York.

On one of my forays (as a kid), I took my samples around and showed them to the different publishers I had gone up to Harry's place and he said, "Sure, kid, if you want to break into the business, I'll set aside a table here for you." Then he said "But you're not good enough to really do any work yet!" And he was so right! Anyway, he had about half-a-dozen artists or more working in a "bullpen" setup, and

BY STEVE RINGGENBERG



he said, "You watch the other guys and they'll help you when they can… and come up here after school,' which is what I did. After school, I'd go up there for two or three hours till about five or six at night. Harry paid me five bucks a week to learn how to get into the business. It was very kind of him.

There's even more to this story, but I don't really think it's necessary to get into to it. Suffice it to say that my relationship with Harry really extended right up to the time I started my own school here.

As far as I was concerned, Harry was the best! To me, the five bucks a week that Harry gave was a munificent sum. Five bucks was a hell of lot of dough back in the late '30s. In fact there were a lot of adults who were making five to seven bucks a week at the time. My father, when he started working not too long before that in New York, would take a quarter a day for his lunch… and that would do him for the five cent ride (ten cents round trip) and leave fifteen cents for lunch.

SR: *When you were working in the Chesler shop, did you ever assist the other cartoonists?*

JK: Oh no. The guys up there were really terrific! Guys. like George Tuska and Charlie Sultan… and one or two others that don't come to mind just now. I'd sit in a corner of the room and not bother anybody and Harry would supply me with a script that perhaps he wasn't going to be using right away, and let me practice on that. Then, every once in a while, one of the other artists would amble over, take a look over my shoulder, and say, "Hey Joe, maybe watch this kind of drawing," or, "Do this and that," and that was the kind of instruction I got. The stuff that I did at that time was really not for publication.

I understand that when Harry eventually sold out years later, there was stuff that I had done when I was a kid among his materials, that stuff did eventually get published.

SR: *Were you embarrassed by that?*

JK: I think I'm embarrassed by every one of the jobs that I did. I've been in the business such a long time that stuff that I've done perhaps twenty years ago, thirty years ago embarrasses me, hurts my eyes. (*Laughs*).

SR: *How long did your association with Chesler last?*

JK: Probably about, oh, I would say, perhaps the equivalent of one semester. Perhaps five or six months or so…

SR: *Then what did you do?*

JK: Well, my buddy Norman Maurer and I were both interested in the same thing at the same age. We started the High School of Music and Art together. Norman would later be my partner in some of the publishing ventures, so we would get some samples together and, between the two of us, we would take our stuff and hit every publisher we could. We'd just go up and

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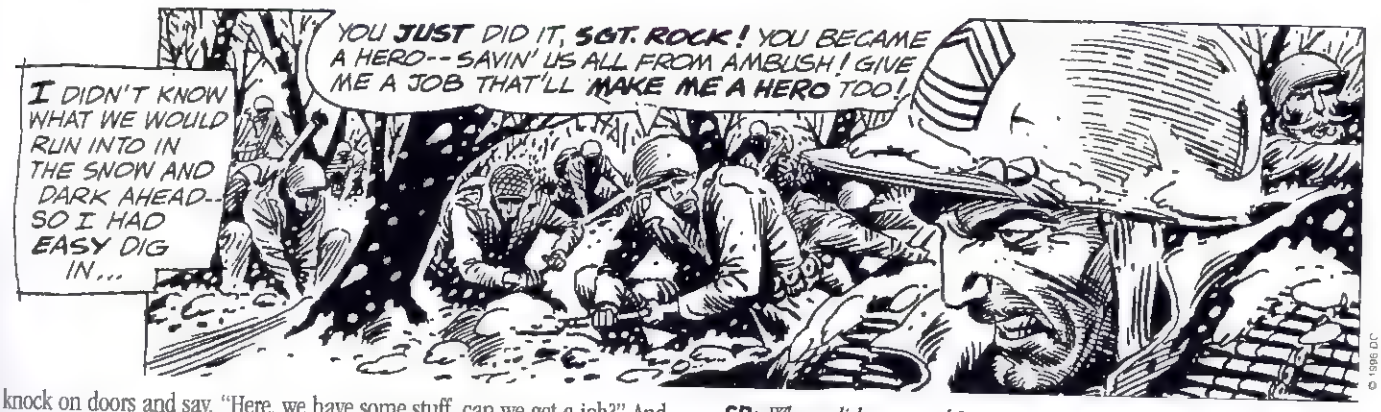
Two samples of Kubert's DC war work from Our Army At War #136: above–a symphony of sound effects punctuates this "split" panel from page 9, and below, "the battle-happy joes" of Easy Company from page 3.

YOU'D NEVER'VE KNOWN IT TO LOOK AT 'EM-- BUT EASY'S LIGHT MG CREW WERE BUDDY-BUDDIES!
I CAN'T BEAR TO SEE YOU GRINNIN' ALL THE TIME WHEN I'M FEELIN' SO MISERABLE! FOR TWO CENTS I'D KNOCK THAT SILLY GRIN OFF YOUR FACE!
I GAVE YOU YOUR LAST CHANCE A WEEK AGO! LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO BEAR IT!
© 1986 DC


I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WE WOULD RUN INTO IN THE SNOW AND DARK AHEAD-- SO I HAD EASY DIG IN...
YOU JUST DID IT, SGT. ROCK! YOU BECAME A HERO--SAVIN' US ALL FROM AMBUSH! GIVE ME A JOB THAT'LL MAKE ME A HERO TOO!
© 1996 DC

knock on doors and say, "Here, we have some stuff, can we get a job?" And that's pretty much the way we broke into the business.

While I was working for Harry, of course, this was more of a learning procedure than anything else. But it wasn't long after that that I was actually hired to do some work. I think I was about twelve when the first publication came out… and I got paid for it!

SR: *Do you recall what that first work was?*

JK: Yes. The name of it was Volton and it was for the Holyoke Publishing Company. Holyoke had an office on 42nd Street off Times Square. The guy's name that bought it from me was Temerson. It was a six-page story, and I think I got paid five bucks a page.

SR: *That's not a bad page rate.*

JK: Well, I was vastly overpaid, believe me. (*Laughs*).

SR: *Was that for both pencils and inks?*

JK: It was pencils and inks. At the time, most of the artists I knew did the complete job. It was exceptional if there was more than one fellow working on the same script. The comic book artist was thought to be capable and expected to do the entire job, both penciling and inking. However, it was also known and understood that when the artist of a syndicated newspaper strip became successful enough, the one who owned the strip (the artist-writer, or whoever it might be) would hire assistants to help them. I guess that's where more than one person working on the strip actually started.

SR: *What kind of character was Volton?*

JK: It was a superhero kind of a character that was based on some sort of an electronic theme. He was able to go through telephone wires and stuff like that. I think I only did about two or three stories. It appeared in a publication called *Catman Comics*. The company went out of business decades ago. I probably helped. (*Laughs*).

SR: *After doing Volton, did you do more work for Holyoke?*

JK: I don't think so. At that time there were twenty or thirty different publishers. The largest were still DC, the company that everybody was trying to break into. But you couldn't get close to them unless you were really good.

I used to go up to MLJ… I did a lot of work up there. As a matter of fact, some of my first jobs at MLJ was on the Archie character. After Bob Montana started the strip. I inked some of those things. God, I guess I was maybe twelve or thirteen, something like that.

SR: *Did you work with Montana in his studio?*

JK: I worked with him but it wasn't in a studio. A lot of these guys worked right in the office. It was very different from what occurs today… with most of the guys doing the work on a freelance basis at home.

But back then it was different. At Timely, for instance, there were usually about a half a dozen or so artists in their offices. Even though the publisher would supply them with a place to work… a table, a comfortable area… if they wanted, a lot of them just preferred to do it out of their home.

SR: *Where did you work?*

JK: I always worked at home… I loved working at home. I was able to be with my family, and I had the freedom to do what I wanted, when I wanted. It also kind of engendered a discipline in me that said "look you've got to get this stuff done when you say you're going to get it done" That doesn't mean I haven't missed deadlines. I have, and many of them. It took a long time to learn the importance of meeting them.

SR: *What was a typical day like when you were doing the most comic book work?*

JK: Well, during those times I was working at home and, for a couple of years, working up at DC as an editor. That meant that I had to go up to the office two or three times a week… on my own time, and at my own behest. But my normal day was getting up at eight or nine o'clock in the morning and working on my stuff. Sometimes, and if I decided I wanted to, I'd take a break and be with the kids, or work with the kids. They came first with me, and it was great. When I went on vacation, I would usually go with the thought in mind that I would do some work when I was away. Invariably that never occurred. What do they say about the best-laid plans?

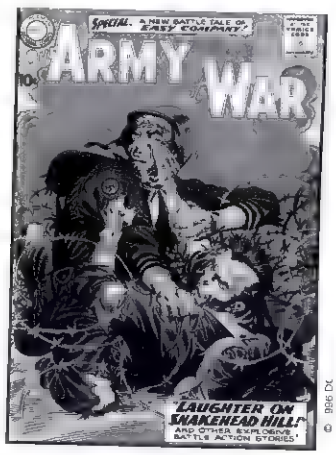
SR: *Ah, the best laid plans of mice and men...*

JK: Right.

SR: *...gang aft agley.*

JK: Exactly, and it happened often, but it was great, because I had the opportunity of seeing my kids grow up, and kind of sharing the responsibilities with my wife,

"The Rock in the snow!" as Easy digs in–from Our Army At War #136, page 13, above, and below, Easy vs. Nazi on the cover of Our Army At War #84, featuring the DC war classic "Laughter On Snakehead Hill!"


SPECIAL: A NEW BATTLE TALE OF EASY COMPANY
10¢
OUR ARMY AT WAR
LAUGHTER ON SNAKEHEAD HILL!
AND OTHER EXPLOSIVE BATTLE ACTION STORIES
© DC

which I enjoyed. It was wonderful.

But there are a lot of guys who feel uncomfortable working in the same place in which they live, and for some reason just feel a lot more at ease if they know they're going someplace to do their work. Then when they finish, they're home… and there's a complete separation between the two. I just never felt that way.

SR: *Along with freelancing for MLJ, you also worked at Quality.*

JK: I did work for Quality. It wasn't unusual for guys like me to work for every place in the business. In fact, that approach has kind of been a holdover for me up until lately. It's what I've been trying to tell people

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SR: *How did you meet Harry Chesler?*

JK: (*Laughs*) I had just started attending the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan and living in Brooklyn. At the time, Harry's place was on Twenty third street in New York.

On one of my forays (as a kid), I took my samples around and showed them to the different publishers I had gone up to Harry's place and he said, "Sure, kid, if you want to break into the business, I'll set aside a table here for you." Then he said "But you're not good enough to really do any work yet!" And he was so right! Anyway, he had about half-a-dozen artists or more working in a "bullpen" setup, and

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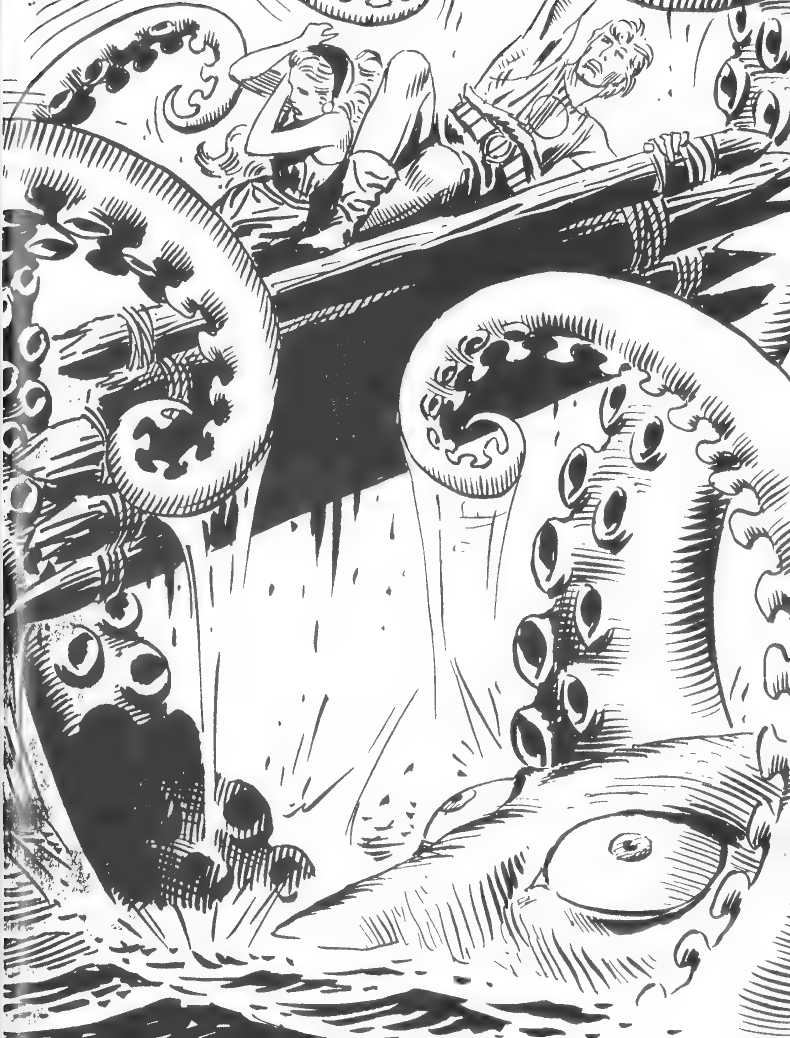


who want to get into the business… the only insurance that a freelancer has is… one job on the table, one job pinned to the table that he's going to be working on, and a third one in the mail ready to come.

What you have to do is schedule yourself so that you're assured of a certain flow of work coming through all the time. That's why, during those days, I'd also be working for Quality (or any of the other place), at the same time I'd be trying to get a job elsewhere. All so that I didn't depend on any one place

SR: *While you were at Quality did you ever work with Will Eisner or Reed Crandall?*

JK: I never worked with Crandall, but I did work for Eisner. I was about thirteen when I did, just cleaning up here and there when he was doing The Spirit…sweeping floors and erasing artwork…stuff like that. I would do it during summer vacation

I think that the pay there was about twelve and half bucks a week, which again was really very good What is most important to remember is that I should have been paying them… they were giving me an extravagant and invaluable education, and I took advantage of every moment I could… to learn as much as I could. After all, this is what I loved and wanted to do I did eventually work on The Spirit…

I did inking over Lou Fine's pencils. That occurred while I was still going to high school, so I guess you could say that I've been around the block a couple times.

SR: *Did you pick up a lot of storytelling ideas from Eisner?*

JK: Oh, definitely. Will was one of the guys whose work really affected me in terms of the storytelling facets. I think cartoonists are communicators and storytellers… and the graphics that we use (the artwork) is merely a way to get that story across. as As far as I'm concerned, the perfect comic strip or comic book is a perfect marriage between the graphics and the story.

SR: *Working with Lou Fine must have been an experience. He was so great.*

JK: He was just absolutely terrific! Lou was the artist's artist. A cartoonist's cartoonist. I remember when I was working up at Chesler's, every time a new issue with Lou's work would come out, all of us, me included, would run down to the corner candy store, (that's where they sold the comic books) and we'd grab Lou Fine's stuff… The Ray or The Black Condor .. stuff like that.

SR: *Fine was one of the greats. but he's somebody not a lot has been written about. What kind of guy was he?*

OUR ARMY AT WAR
NOV #136
IT WAS TOUGH SEEIN' IN THE SNOW.
CREEEK CRICK
I GUESS MY EYES WERE ON MY FEET...
TRYIN' TO SPOT ANY CRACKS IN THE ICE THAT MIGHT OPEN UP UNDER 'EM...
CREAK CREEEK
CRICK
SUDDENLY, I SLIPPED LIKE SOMEONE HAD YANKED A BANANA PEEL UNDER ME...IT SAVED MY LIFE...
UHHHGH-! MACHINE GUN AMBUSH--WAITIN' FOR US TO CROSS THE ICE!
RATATATAT
SWISH
RATATATAT
THEY TRIED TO TRACK ME AS I SLID FORWARD...
HOPE I CAN GET THIS "EGG" OFF--
--BEFORE THE ICE OPENS UP UNDER ME!
PLINK
RATATA

JK: I can only tell you from my viewpoint. He was one of the nicest, kindest… one of the most generous guys there was… but I found that true more times than not in this business. I've never had a cold shoulder turned to me or had somebody unwilling to help. They'd even help before I'd ask.

Irv Novick was the first guy who showed me how to draw a German helmet. Lou Fine showed me how to draw anatomy… as I was inking over his stuff… I was working with Alex Kotzky at the time. Alex, who I think is still doing Apartment 3-G, was also inking on The Spirit at the time (this is up in Stamford, Connecticut). Lou would pencil and we'd be inking his stuff and if we had any questions or wanted to know anything about the way work should be done, Lou was more than happy to help us in any way that he could. I think that's true with most of the people that I've met in the business. Not most, all of the people that I've met. I don't recall one person, as I've said before, turning a cold shoulder toward me when I've asked for help.

OUR ARMY AT WAR
NOV #136 14
I--DO--AND I DID--I MEAN I DID GET THE GRENADE OFF--AND THE ICE DID OPEN UP UNDER ME.
I'M GOIN' UNDER--
UHHH--!
BLAM
CRACK
THE BLAST MISSED ONE OF THE MACHINE GUNNERS--BUT HE DIDN'T MISS ME... I NEVER
KPOW
POW
12

Sgt. Rock goes from thin ice to cold water in a beautifully drawn sequence from Our Army At War #136 (pages 13 and 14).

SR: *How do you see the business today?*

JK: Well, the business today is as different from when I started as night is from day. It's two entirely different kinds of businesses. For instance the reason I was able break in was that comic books sold for ten cents a shot and there were sixty-four pages of material in those books. There was space enough for anybody who wanted to break in because those sixty-four pages had to be filled.

There was space enough for somebody to learn on the job too, because the lousy five pages that I did, were kind of "obliterated" by the other sixty better pages.

That situation doesn't exist any more. You have a twenty-two page magazine that sells for a buck and a half, sometimes, three dollars, even five dollars. They can't afford to throw away pages, or allow somebody to learn on the job. Either you know the stuff, and know what you're doing, or you don't get the job.

There's a lot of money and other things that are riding on it… in addition to the merchandising based on comic book characters. That was never an issue back then. Yeah, there was maybe one standout when Superman came out and they started the radio show and the animated cartoons, but it was absolute-

SR: *It seems like now the big companies, especially DC and Marvel, are making more money from the merchandising than they are from the comics.*

JK: I think that that's probably true. In fact, I think that at this stage of the game, they could probably afford to lose money on the publishing end because it's more than made up on the merchandising end.

SR: *You've done your share of product artwork… There's a line of action figures toys out now with your art on the packaging*

JK: Yeah. There's a whole Sergeant Savage series that came out, which I'm involved in as a principal. Hasbro approached me on this and it sounded like an interesting venture, so I became involved.

SR: *Did you help design the characters?*

JK: Yes. In fact, I did design the original characters from which they made the toys, and from which they put together a video.

SR: *Did you draw them or sculpt them?*

JK: I drew them. The sculpting was done based on what I had done. But I had drawn the originals.

SR: *This is a digression Joe, but given how powerful your style is, have you ever considered doing bronzes or something?*

JK: (*Laughs*) I've thought about… It's strange you should bring that up. I've thought about doing some statuary work but not particularly comic book characters. I've always been a devotee and an ardent admirer of Michelangelo's work. And when I had the opportunity to see his in Europe, that was magic. But I've never really had the opportunity to do that myself.

SR: *Yeah, I would think there would be a market for something like a little limited-edition cast of Tor or Sgt. Rock.*

JK: (*Laughs*) Well, we'll publicize it and see what happens. (*More laughs.*)

SR: *In your early days as a comic book artist, who were your main artistic influences?*

JK: Well, I think the three that influenced me influenced almost everybody else who came into the business at that time. They were: Hal Foster, who did Prince Valiant and Tarzan, Alex Raymond, who did Flash Gordon, and Milton Caniff who did Terry and the Pirates. Those three probably sired more cartoonists than they were ever aware of. Raymond was an incredibly wonderful artist… I tell you, the older I get and the more I see of their stuff… the more I appreciate it.

SR: *Didn't Mort Meskin became kind of an influence for you?*

JK: Oh, yeah. I inked a lot of his stuff. Mort was one of the artists that I met up at MLJ. He was on staff there when I went there as a kid. He was one of the first artists that I ever met and I never dreamed that eventually I'd be inking his stuff.

When he went to DC, he was doing stuff like Johnny Quick and The Vigilante… that's where I got the opportunity to ink him. And I was so young, and so innocent… and so naive, that getting to work on his beautiful stuff didn't scare me. (*Laughs*) That's how innocent and dumb I was.

SR: *Meskin has got to be one of the all-time greats in the business and yet he's somebody you never hear about these days.*

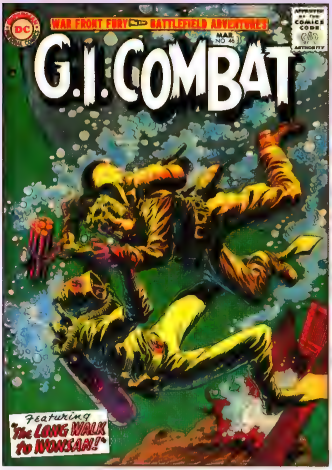
JK: I don't know why that is. He was a wonder- (*Continued on page 60*)

Above, Kubert renders the super-couple, Hawkman and Hawkgirl (from Brave & Bold #35, May 1961). Below, Hawkman versus caveman from that issue's "Valley of Vanishing Men".

ly minimal in comparison to what's going on today. Full-scale movies with live-action characters playing Superman and Batman, plus the number of toys that are coming out. Nobody can take a chance allowing somebody who's not experienced (and possibly doesn't know what he's doing) to touch those characters, because they are heavy-duty investments… and nobody's going to take a chance on an unproven newcomer.

THE MANY FACES OF JOE KUBERT

The "combat-happy Joes" of Easy Company surround Sgt. Rock on the all-time classic cover of Our Army At War #112 (Nov 1961). Because of its cover, this issue is now one of the highest demand Kubert books.



G.I. Combat #46 (Mar 1957).

© 1996 DC

Son Of Sinbad #1 (Feb 1950)

© ST. JOHN PUB

SHOWCASE presents
Rip Hunter... TIME MASTER
RIP, WHAT'LL WE DO? WE'RE TRAPPED IN THIS MEDIEVAL VALLEY OF MONSTERS— WITH NO CHANCE OF ESCAPE!

Showcase #25 (Apr 1960)

© 1996 DC

DC Special #5 (Oct/ Dec 1969)

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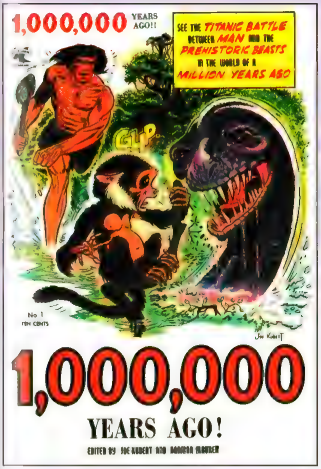
1,000,000 YEARS AGO!!
SEE THE TITANIC BATTLE BETWEEN MAN AND THE PREHISTORIC BEASTS IN THE WORLD OF A MILLION YEARS AGO
1,000,000
YEARS AGO!

One Million Years Ago #1 (Sep 1953)

© '53 JOHN

Star Spangled War Stories #138 (Apr/May 1968).

© 1996 DC

100th TNT ISSUE!
NOV
Our ARMY at WAR
ROCK! - STOP! YOU CAN'T ATTACK A TANK WITH TWO BUSTED HANDS! JUST TO SHOW ME HOW TO FIGHT LIKE AN EASY CO MAN!

Our Army At War #100 (Nov 1960)

© 1996 DC

BRAVE AND THE BOLD presents
NOV
NO. 44
12¢
HAWKMAN
ARMED WITH A WEAPON OF THE PAST, THE WINGED WONDER BATTLES AGAINST WEAPONS OF THE FUTURE...IN...
"The MEN WHO MOVED THE WORLD!"

Brave & Bold #44 (Oct/Nov 1962)

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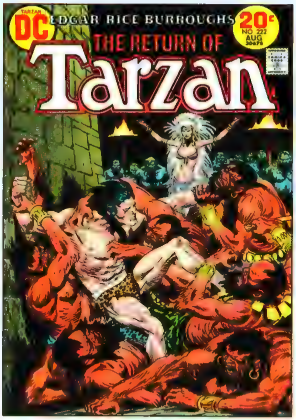
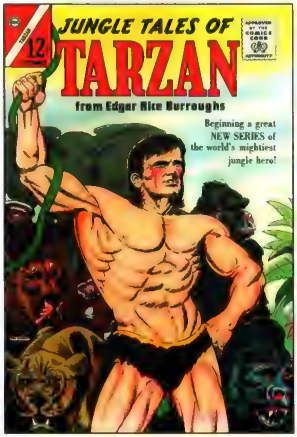
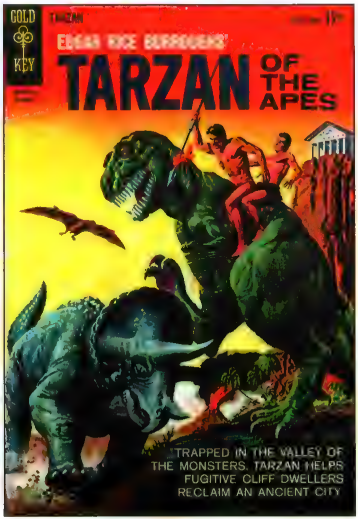


Tarzan Of The Apes #207 (Apr 1972); Tarzan #222 (Aug 1973); Tarzan #208 (May 1972); Tarzan #228 (Feb 1974).

© 1996 DC
TARZAN © 1996 ERB

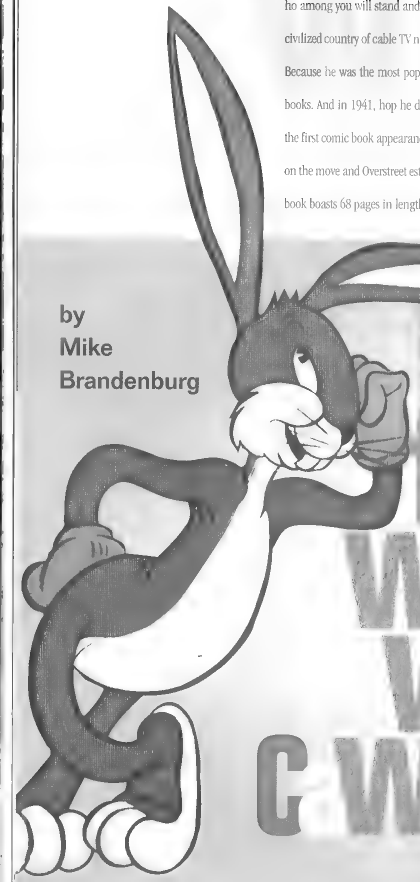
Korak Son Of Tarzan #46 (May/Jun 1972); Tarzan Adventures Vol-9 #23 (Oct 24, 1959); Jungle Tales Of Tarzan #1 (Dec 1964); Tarzan Of The Apes #146 (Oct 1964)




GOLD KEY
EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS'
TARZAN OF THE APES
TRAPPED IN THE VALLEY OF THE MONSTERS, TARZAN HELPS FUGITIVE CLIFF DWELLERS RECLAIM AN ANCIENT CITY

ho among you will stand and say they've never enjoyed a Bugs Bunny cartoon? How can a person in this civilized country of cable TV not profess to laughing at a ten minute Bugs feature either as a child or adult? Because he was the most popular "wabbit" in cartoons, Bugs was a sure bet to make a hop into comic books. And in 1941, hop he did. *Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies* #1 was published by Dell and was the first comic book appearance of Bugs and several other Warner Brothers characters. This book has been on the move and Overstreet estimates only 171 copies exist, perhaps only eight in Near Mint condition. The book boasts 68 pages in length and has poetic introductions inside the front and back covers.

by
Mike
Brandenburg



Mv fv
F V-Wt
W Sc-W'
Wa BT
C W CT BL S

Cawectible #1 EIGHT STORIES ARE PRESENTED, the first of which is "The Wild Hare". It features Elmer and Bugs and is an eight page retelling of the classic story of wabbit hunting. "SH . . be vewy quiet. . . I'm hunting wabbits!" The second story is "Porky's Hired Hand", and is also eight pages. In this tale, Porky hires Gregory Grunt from the Cornstalk Employment Agency to be nightwatchman at his chicken house. A pesky fox tries his best to outwit Gregory, but loses in the end when Porky shows up.

Sniffles the Mouse makes his debut in the third story where he befriends a sleepless little girl (Mary Jane). They go on an adventure and find some magic sand which reduces her to his size. An average day with dad is shown in the fourth tale called "Tom Thumb in Trouble". Dad, of course is a giant in comparison to Tom.

Porky's Hollywood Sketchbook is a feature and serves as a break between stories. It portrays the likes of Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, Jackie Cooper, and Charlie McCarthy in caricature. Pat Patsy and Pete make their first appearance in comics in the fifth story titled the same. This one is by Mickey Mouse artist Win Smith and is a cute yarn about an expedition in the south seas in a search for rare specimens for a New York zoo. . . and the unexpected discovery of cannibals!

Elmer ends up in jail in the next story called "Elmer and his Magic Wand." This is a four page outing in which Elmer buys a magic wand in hopes of doing tricks . . and with the help of Bugs, has a string of bad luck.

Bugs foils enemy spies and takes a test flight in the next classic feature "Model Airplane Contest" is its title and it makes reference to Axis forces. This is the first time in the book that a reader might be reminded of the conflict in Europe.

Before ending the book, we find "Pokerhuntas and Captain Johnny Smith" as the last offering. This pokes fun at the pilgrims and of the Mayflower landing.

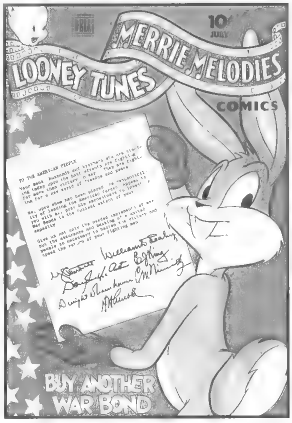
Considering the popularity and historic impact of the Looney Tunes characters (especially Bugs Bunny), this is a book to have!

Cawectible #2 The black and white 8 1/2" by 11 3/8" *Large Feature* #8 is considered by some to be the first Bugs Bunny comic book. It contains two stories and is extremely difficult to find in high grade. Porky and Bugs team up in "Bugs Bunny and the North Woods Mystery." As detectives in the "Bunny and Pig Detective Agency", they go after some crooks in the woods, take a log ride, run into a monsterous grizzly bear, and eventually save the day.

The second and final story is "Bugs Bunny and the Goofy Goose." It costars Porky and Elmer and tells the tale of Bugs inheriting an estate. Geraldine (the goose), part of Bugs' inheritance, supposedly lays eggs of gold! But instead of bringing the trio fame and fortune, bad luck is all they get until the goose

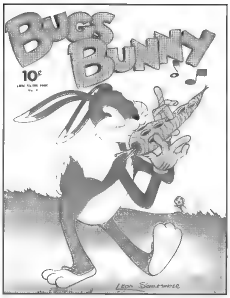
"Here's a rabbit called Bugs Bunny, Who spends his time being funny; He's always playing pranks and jokes On all the other cartoon Folks!"

"Elmer is a little man who frets and worries all he can; But if he makes you feel glad– Then he forgets 'bout being sad!"



Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies #45 (Jul 1945) This cover has Bugs holding a letter to the "American People", urging them to buy war bonds. The seven signatures are all from famous military men, including Dwight D. Eisenhower, General Douglas MacArthur, and Admiral Chester Nimitz.

Large Feature Comic #8 (1942) This was the first comic devoted wholly to the "wascawy wabbit". In addition to the two "feature length" Bugs Bunny stories, it also offers a back cover biography of the wabbit– noting that he is the official mascot of the 184th Quarter Masters Department of the U.S. Army.



Four Color #164 (Sep 1947) The early Four Color issues that featured Bugs Bunny combined long humorous adventure stories with dramatic and colorful covers, as this one for "The Frozen Kingdom" demonstrates.

haphazardly springs them from jail. When Geraldine eventually does lay an egg, it's tin… not gold. This turns out to be OK, as a tin shortage is announced!

Published in 1942, the editors apparently still thought it was important to introduce the "wascawy wabbit" to the public. Inside the back cover is a short "bio" of Bugs complete with information about his being the official mascot of the 184th Quarter Masters Department of the US Army.

Most serious Bugs Bunny collectors and fans treasure this unique and historic item, not only because of its age, but because it contains "longer" early stories of the grey-eared Warner Bros. icon. In fact, the first story was over twenty pages (whew)… more than twice as long as the early eight-page stories in *Looney Tunes* #1. This and the bio information offered inside, make this a must-have for every serious Bugs collector!

Cawectible #3 The next book significant in our fair Hare's reign in comics is *Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies* #45 dated July 1945. As a war cover, it has Bugs holding a letter to the American people and has the signatures of seven of the most influential Generals and Admirals in the US military, including one future President. In reading this plea for the buying of war bonds, one must admit that this is a fairly serious and heartfelt message for the cover of a comic book. A piece of literature most thought was for children in 1945. Five stories comprise this book with Bugs, Elmer, Porky, Sniffles, and Henry Hawk each getting a solo story. Anyone who collects war covers should look this one over. Do the signatures of MacArthur, Nimitz, or Eisenhower appear on any other comic?

Cawectible #4 Hitting the racks in 1947, *Four Color* #164's spectacularly vivid cover features "Bugs Bunny Finds the Frozen Kingdom." This book offers two stories which have Barks-like art and story. A gold miner named "Frosty Fred" sends Porky and Bugs to Alaska to find their own gold. They find a frozen kingdom named "Kingdom of Radiom" and end up heroes after a rescue. At first they think their reward is a chest of gold when in fact it is lead. Not until they visit their cleaners do they find out their clothes are woven of gold!

In "Bugs Bunny and the Magic Perfume", the second story, our wabbit tries to win over the wife of a produce store owner. He does this to get more

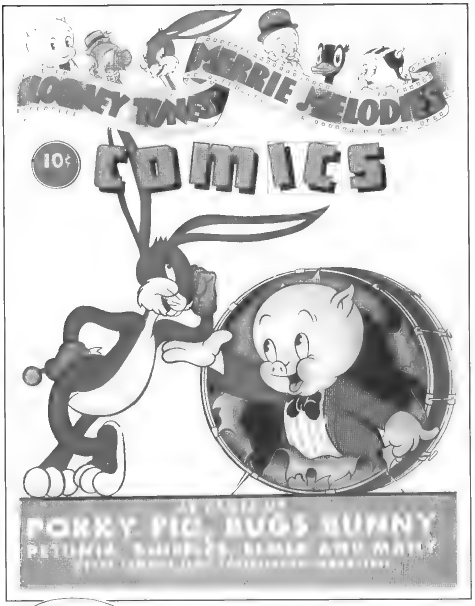
carrots! He sports a new perfume called Eau d'Phew and it is supposed to make the girls crazy over you. Bugs mistakes the perfume with an experimental gas which renders its victim open to suggestion. It doesn't take Bugs long to get into a pickle and, as always, he wins out in the end. He gets his carrots and a handsome reward for returning the gas. Any Barks fan would find this a nice addition.

Cawectible #5 *Bugs Bunny All Picture Comics* is a Whitman publication copyrighted 1943. This is a hardbound book measuring 7 3/4" by 3 3/4". Its cover is in color featuring the older drawn Bugs. The interior is black and white having 186 pages not including the copyright and title pages. No credits are given for artwork or authorship, nor are there any splash pages other than the first story. Leon Schlesinger is the only name mentioned, but his signature is in fact found on many of the early *Looney Tunes* comics. It has been my understanding that he has more to do with the cartoon productions than comics. 530 is the only number on the book and it appears on the spine. No price appears either.

The first story is "Model Airplane Contest" obviously reprinted from *Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies* #1. What is interesting is that the story is expanded and the ending changed. An ending which allows the reader to move on to the next plot. Bugs goes on to crash land the experimental aircraft in the ocean and is picked up by an enemy submarine.

No advertisements are in the book and each plot/storyline moves into the next. The only other identifiable reprint is that of "The Super Duper Rabbit" from *Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies* #5. This is supposed to be the first animal super hero in comics and perplexes me as I'm not sure if any of these *Looney Tunes* stories were reprinted at this early of a date. There is writing in pencil on the inside front cover dated December 15, 1943. If any *CBM* reader could help me authenticate or place this book, it would be greatly appreciated.

In watching the cartoons and reading the comic books, I find the humor simple and genuine. Reinforcing the truth that what's funny for adults is funny for kids. Well, so much for my five favawut wascawy wabbit cawectibles! So… th th th… that's all folks! ■



Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies #1 (1941) This first appearance of Bugs Bunny in comic book form was also the first issue of one of Dell's longest-running funny animal titles. The cute little "adieu" at the left appeared on the back cover.

Most Collectible Comics of '96

1. Captain America #74 1879
2. Suspense #3 951
3. Young Men #24 927
4. Black Terror #1 906
5. Startling #49 864
6. All Winners #19 855
7. Submariner #32 822
8. Crash #4 762
9. Human Torch #36 753
10 Reform School Girl 747
11. Marvel Mystery #92 720
12. All Star #8 681
13. Phantom Lady #17 660
14 Terrific #5 648
15. Fight #31 627
16. Captain America #75 603
17 Mystery Men #1 552
18. Exciting #9 528
19. Our Army At War #83 519
20. Fantastic #3 389
21. Archie #1 502
22. Suspense #8 378
23. Seven Seas #6 336
24. Wonder Woman #105 324
25. Hit #5 306
26. Catman #32 303
27. Phantom Lady #13 294
28. All Negro #1 282
29. Strange Tales #89 270
30. Secret Origins Annual #1 267
31. Sensation #1 255
32 Detective #31 243
33. GI Combat #87 240
34. Batman #47 231
35. Witness #1 228
36 Superman #53 222
37. Hit #1 213
38. Action #10 207
39. All Top #8 198
40. Wonder Woman #1 192
41. Captain America #1 186
42. Journey Into Mystery #1 177
43. Crash #5 165
44 House Of Secrets #92 120
45. Casper #1 114
46. Hulk #1 104
47. Showcase #17 96
48. National #7 93
49. Mystery In Space #53 90
50. Amazing Mysteries #32 75

CBM Readers Pick the

50 Most Collectible Comics *of 1996*

This CBM survey is based on 2,981 nominations by collectors and dealers from all over the country. Here are the results sorted by rank order, age, and publishing company. Note that the overwhelming number one choice is *Captain America* #74.

Data collected and collated by Matt Schiffman and Gary M. Carter

Most Collectible Golden Age Comics of 1996 (Jun 1938-1945)

Suspense #3 (Rank 9; Score 951)
Black Terror #1 (Rank 4; Score 906)
Crash #4 (Rank 8, Score 762)
Human Torch #36 (Rank 9, Score 753)
All Star #8 (Rank 12; Score 681)
Terrific #5 (Rank 14; Score 648)
Fight #31 (Rank 15; Score 627)
Mystery Men #1 (Rank 17; Score 552)
Exciting #9 (Rank 18, Score 528)
Fantastic #3 (Rank 20; Score 389)
Archie #1 (Rank 21; Score 502)
Suspense #8 (Rank 22; Score 378)
Hit #5 (Rank 25; Score 306)
Sensation #1 (Rank 31; Score 255)
Detective #31 (Rank 32, Score 243)
Hit #1 (Rank 37; Score 213)
Action #10 (Rank 38; Score 207)
Wonder Woman #1 (Rank 40; Score 192)
Captain America #1 (Rank 41; Score 186)
Crash #5 (Rank 43; Score 165)
National #7 (Rank 48; Score 93)

Most Collectible Post Golden Age Comics of 1996 (1946-1949)

Captain America #74 (Rank 1; Score 1872)
Startling #49 (Rank 5, Score 864)
All Winners #19 (Rank 6; Score 855)
Submariner #32 (Rank 7; Score 822)
Marvel Mystery #92 (Rank 11; Score 720)
Phantom Lady #17 (Rank 13; Score 660)
Captain America #75 (Rank 16; Score 603)
Seven Seas #6 (Rank 23; Score 336)
Catman #32 (Rank 26; Score 303)
Phantom Lady #13 (Rank 27; Score 294)
All Negro #1 (Rank 28; Score 282)
Batman #47 (Rank 34, Score 231)
Witness #1 (Rank 35; Score 228)
Superman #53 (Rank 36; Score 222)
All Top #8 (Rank 39; Score 198)
Casper #1 (Rank 45; Score 114)
Amazing Mysteries #32 (Rank 50, Score 75)

The Most Collectible Pre Silver Age Comics of 1996 (1950-August 1956)

Young Men #24 (Rank 3; Score 927)
Reform School Girl (Rank 10; Score 747)
Journey Into Mystery #1 (Rank 42; Score 177)

Most Collectible Silver Age Comics of 1996 (September 1956-1969)

Our Army At War #83 (Rank. 19; Score 519)
Wonder Woman #105 (Rank. 24, Score. 324)
Strange Tales #89 (Rank. 29; Score: 270)
Secret Origins Annual #1 (Rank. 30; Score: 267)
GI Combat #87 (Rank: 33; Score: 240)
Hulk #1 (Rank: 46; Score: 104)
Showcase #17 (Rank: 47; Score: 96)
Mystery In Space #53 (Rank: 49; Score. 90)

Most Collectible Bronze Age of 1996 (1970-1979)

House Of Secrets #92 (Rank 44; Score 120)

Most Collectible of 1996 Sorted by Publishing Co.

All-Negro Comics:
- All Negro #1 (Rank 28; Score 282)

DC: All Star #8 (Rank 12; Score 681)
- Our Army At War #83 (Rank 19, Score 519)
- Wonder Woman #105 (Rank 24, Score 324)
- Secret Origins Ann. #1 (Rank 30, Score 267)

Sorted by Publishing Company - continued

- Sensation #1 (Rank 31; Score 255)
- Detective #31 (Rank 32; Score 243)
- GI Combat #87 (Rank 33, Score 240)
- Batman #47 (Rank 34; Score 231)
- Superman #53 (Rank 36; Score 222)
- Action #10 (Rank 38; Score 207)
- Wonder Woman #1 (Rank 40, Score 192)
- House Of Secrets #92 (Rank 44; Score 120)
- Showcase #17 (Rank 47; Score 96)
- Mystery In Space #53 (Rank 49; Score 90)

Fiction House:
- Fight #31 (Rank 15; Score 627)

Fox: Phantom Lady #17 (Rank 13; Score 660)
- Mystery Men #1 (Rank 17; Score 552)
- Fantastic #3 (Rank 20, Score 389)
- Phantom Lady #13 (Rank 27; Score 294)
- All Top #8 (Rank 39, Score 198)

Marvel/Timely:
- Captain America #74 (Rank 1; Score 1872)
- Young Men #24 (Rank 3; Score 927)
- All Winners #19 (Rank 6; Score 855)
- Submariner #32 (Rank 7; Score 822)
- Human Torch #36 (Rank 9; Score 753)
- Marvel Mystery #92 (Rank 11; Score 720)
- Captain America #75 (Rank 16; Score 603)
- Strange Tales #89 (Rank 29, Score 270)
- Witness #1 (Rank 35; Score 228)
- Captain America #1 (Rank 41, Score 186)
- Journey Into Mystery #1 (Rank 42; Score 177)
- Hulk #1 (Rank 46; Score 104)
- Amazing Mysteries #32 (Rank 50; Score 75)

MLJ/Archie:
- Archie #1 (Rank 21; Score 502)

Nedor/Better/Standard:
- Black Terror #1 (Rank 4; Score 906)
- Startling #49 (Rank 5, Score 864)
- Exciting #9 (Rank 18, Score 598)

Quality:
- Hit #5 (Rank 25, Score 306)
- Hit #1 (Rank 37; Score 213)
- National #7 (Rank 48; Score 93)

Realistic/Avon:
- Reform School Girl (Rank 10, Score 747)

St John:
- Casper #1 (Rank 45; Score 114)

Tem/Et Es Go/Continental/Holyoke:
- Suspense #3 (Rank 2; Score 951)
- Crash #4 (Rank 8; Score 762)
- Terrific #5 (Rank 14; Score 648)
- Suspense #8 (Rank 22; Score 378)
- Catman #32 (Rank 26; Score 303)
- Crash #5 (Rank 43; Score 165)

Universal Phoenix Features:
- Seven Seas #6 (Rank 23, Score 336)

Most Collectible Comics of '97

1. Young Men #24 1654
2. Target Vol. 1, #7 . . .1052
3. National #7 999
4. MAD #1 998
5. Planet #1 995
6 Reform School Girl 981
7. Hit #1 950
8. Black Terror #1 933
9. Submariner #32 926
10 Captain America #74 922
11. More Fun #73 851
12. Captain America #75 834
13. Crime Does Not Pay #22 (#1) 830
14 All Winners #19 829
15. Our Army At War #83 799
16. Harvey Comics Library#1 (Teenage Dope Slaves) 780
17. Jumbo #10 778
18. Archie #1 772
19. Journey Into Mystery #1 768
20. Showcase #17 729
21. Strange Tales #1 719
22. Weird Science-Fantasy #29 . . .716
23. All Winners #21 690
24 Human Torch #36 .686
25. Tales Of Suspense #1 . . .685
26. Superman #14 678
27. Marvel Mystery #92 . . .644
28 Police #1 632
29. Challengers Of The Unk. #1 . .631
30 Secret Origins Annual #1 605
31. Famous Funnies #209 604
32 Jumbo #11 553
33. House of Secrets #1 501
34 Mystery Men #1 499
35. All Star #36 . . . 486
36 Detective #1 485
37. Pep #22 . . . 392
38. Tales Of The Unexpected #1 354
39. Wonder Woman #105 337
40. Master #22 229
41. Strange Tales #115 . .215
42. Mystery In Space #53 188
43. Tales To Astonish #1 121
44. Startling #49 119
45. Strange Adventures #9 . 115
46. GI Combat #87 . . . 113
47 Punch #1 110
48. Sugar & Spike #1 102
49 Jimmy Olsen #1 100
50. Justice League #1 89

CBM Readers Predict the

50 Most Collectible Comics *of 1997*

This CBM survey is based on 2,745 nominations by collectors and dealers from all over the country. As with the results reported on the previous page, they are also sorted by rank order, age, and publishing company.

Note that the number one prediction is *Young Men* #24.

Pre Golden Age Comics of 1997 (1933-Jun 1938)
Detective #1 (Rank 36; Score 485)

Most Collectible Golden Age Comics of 1997 (Jun 1938-1945)
Target #V1#7 (Rank 2; Score 1052)
National #7 (Rank 3; Score 999)
Planet #1 (Rank 5; Score 995)
Hit #1 (Rank 7, Score 950)
Black Terror #1 (Rank 8; Score 933)
More Fun #73 (Rank 11; Score 851)
Crime Does Not Pay #22 (#1) (Rank 13; Score 830)
Jumbo #10 (Rank 17, Score 778)
Archie #1 (Rank 18; Score 772)
Superman #14 (Rank 26; Score 678)
Police #1 (Rank 28; Score 632)
Jumbo #11 (Rank 32; Score 553)
Mystery Men #1 (Rank 34; Score 499)
Pep #22 (Rank 37; Score 392)
Master #22 (Rank 40; Score 229)
Punch #1 (Rank 47; Score 110)

Most Collectible Post Golden Age Comics of 1997 (1946-1949)

Submariner #32 (Rank 9; Score 926)
Captain America #74 (Rank 10; Score 922)
Captain America #75 (Rank 12; Score 834)
All Winners #19 (Rank 14; Score 829)
All Winners #21 (Rank 23; Score 690)
Human Torch #36 (Rank 24, Score 686)
Marvel Mystery #92 (Rank 27; Score 644)
All Star #36 (Rank 35; Score 486)
Startling #49 (Rank 44; Score 119)

The Most Collectible Pre Silver Age Comics of 1997 (1950-August 1956)

Young Men #24 (Rank 1; Score 1654)
MAD #1 (Rank 4, Score 998)
Reform School Girl nn (Rank 6; Score 981)
Harvey Comics Library #1
(Teenage Dope Slaves, Rank 16; Score 780)
Journey Into Mystery #1 (Rank 19; Score 768)
Strange Tales #1 (Rank 21; Score 719)
Weird Science-Fantasy #29 (Rank 22, Score 716)
Famous Funnies #209 (Rank 31; Score 604)
Tales Of The Unexpected #1 (Rank 38; Score 354)
Strange Adventures #9 (Rank 45; Score 115)
Sugar & Spike #1 (Rank 48; Score 102)
Jimmy Olsen #1 (Rank 49; Score 100)

Most Collectible Silver Age Comics of 1997 (September 1956-1969)

Our Army At War #83 (Rank 15; Score 799)
Showcase #17 (Rank 20; Score 729)
Tales Of Suspense #1 (Rank 25, Score 685)
Challengers Of The Unknown #1 (Rank 29; Score 631)
Secret Origins Annual #1 (Rank 30; Score 605)
House of Secrets #1 (Rank 33; Score 501)
Wonder Woman #105 (Rank 39; Score 337)
Strange Tales #115 (Rank 41; Score 215)
Mystery In Space #53 (Rank 42; Score 188)
Tales To Astonish #1 (Rank 43; Score 121)
GI Combat #87 (Rank 46; Score 113)
Justice League #1 (Rank 50; Score 89)

Most Collectible of 1997 Sorted by Publishing Co.

Better/Nedor/Standard:
Black Terror #1 (Rank 8; Score 933)
Startling #49 (Rank 44; Score 119)

Chesler:
Punch #1 (Rank 47; Score 110)

DC: More Fun #73 (Rank 11; Score 851)
Our Army At War #83 (Rank 15; Score 799)

Sorted by Publishing Company - continued

Showcase #17 (Rank 20; Score 729)
Superman #14 (Rank 26; Score 678)
Challengers Of The Unknown #1 (Rank 29; Score 631)
Secret Origins Annual #1 (Rank 30; Score 605)
House of Secrets #1 (Rank 33; Score 501)
All Star #36 (Rank 35; Score 486)
Detective #1 (Rank 36; Score 485)
Tales Of The Unexpected #1 (Rank 38; Score 354)
Wonder Woman #105 (Rank 39; Score 337)
Mystery In Space #53 (Rank 42; Score 188)
Strange Adventures #9 (Rank 45; Score 115)
GI Combat #87 (Rank 46; Score 113)
Sugar & Spike #1 (Rank 48; Score 102)
Jimmy Olsen #1 (Rank 49; Score 100)
Justice League #1 (Rank 50; Score 89)

Eastern Color:
Famous Funnies #209 (Rank 31; Score 604)

EC: MAD #1 (Rank 4; Score 998)
Weird Science-Fantasy #29 (Rank 22; Score 716)

Fiction House:
Planet #1 (Rank 5; Score 995)
Jumbo #10 (Rank 17, Score 778)
Jumbo #11 (Rank 32; Score 553)
Master #22 (Rank 40; Score 229)

Fox: Mystery Men #1 (Rank 34; Score 499)

Harvey:
Harvey Comics Library #1 (Teenage Dope Slaves, Rank 16; Score 780)

Lev Gleason:
Crime Does Not Pay #22 (#1, Rank 13; Score 830)

Marvel/Timely:
Young Men #24 (Rank 1; Score 1654)
Submariner #32 (Rank 9; Score 926)
Captain America #74 (Rank 10, Score 922)
Captain America #75 (Rank 12; Score 834)
All Winners #19 (Rank 14; Score 829)
Journey Into Mystery #1 (Rank 19; Score 768)
Strange Tales #1 (Rank 21; Score 719)
All Winners #21 (Rank 23; Score 690)
Human Torch #36 (Rank 24; Score 686)
Tales Of Suspense #1 (Rank 25, Score 685)
Marvel Mystery #92 (Rank 27; Score 644)
Strange Tales #115 (Rank 41; Score 215)
Tales To Astonish #1 (Rank 43; Score 121)

MLJ/Archie:
Archie #1 (Rank 18; Score 772)
Pep #22 (Rank 37, Score 392)

Novelty: Target #V1#7 (Rank 9; Score 1052)

Quality:
National #7 (Rank 3; Score 999)
Hit #1 (Rank 7; Score 950)
Police #1 (Rank 28; Score 632)

Realistic/Avon:
Reform School Girl (Rank 6; Score 981)

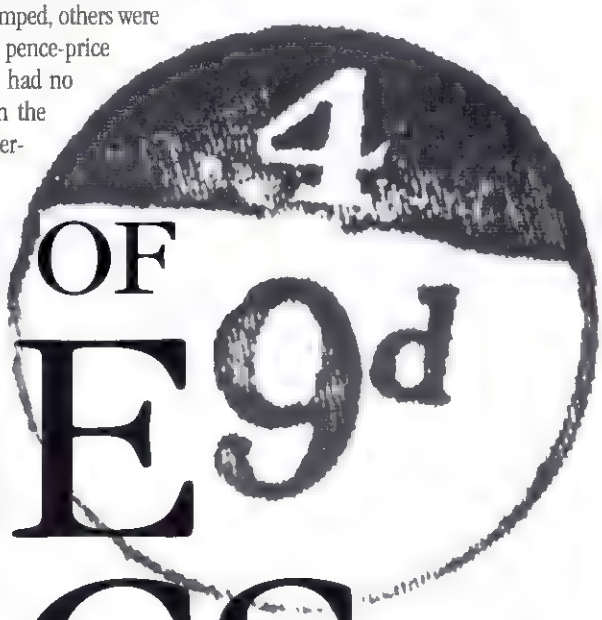
MAKING SENSE OF PENCE COMICS

by Ian Faris

A lot of collectors are familiar with the old UK versions of American comics, namely "pence" comics. These foreign pence books have been around for many years. DC titles were the first imported into the UK in significant quantities in November 1959. At that time, issues were surcharged with a huge black circular rubber-stamped 9d price (around 15c converted at that time). This price rose to 10d and 1/- (one shilling) during the 1960's. 80-page Giants were on sale at one shilling and sixpence, later rising to two shillings. Of course all these prices are from the old UK money system before the decimal system was introduced in February 1971.

The biggest UK importer in the early 1960's was a Leicester firm called Thorpe and Porter. I used to imagine someone sitting and stamping all those comics. What decisions! Where should the stamp go? Over Superman's face..? A cover could easily be ruined by a thoughtlessly placed stamp.

Marvels first appeared during July 1960. Unlike DC titles, some issues were stamped, others were actually printed with a pence-price plate, though these issues had no month printed along with the price, as their cents counterparts did. Throughout the sixties and seventies pence copies in one form or another were the only available versions of American comics. Some newsagents carried DC, others Marvel. They used to arrive at stores in batches, becoming scarce as the stock was sold. Second hand books could be bought from markets, usually with another lesser price written in felt tip across the cover.



By the 1980s comic marts were becoming popular and *The Comic Guide for Great Britain* by Alan Austin, Justin Ebbs, and Gary Fox (published in 1983) set the groundwork for future price guides. I remember getting quite an education out of that early guide; I liked the sense of structure it put into my comic world. *The Official Comic Book Price Guide for Great Britain* by Duncan McAlpine, was first published in 1989 with six revised and increasingly expanded versions over subsequent years.

From around the early 1980s "cents copies" of books tended to carry a higher price tag than "pence copies" of similar grade. At that time, I, like many collectors, searched for those

PENCE COMICS

9d

clean, stamp-free covers and whenever possible avoided the pence-plate versions of Marvels. Dealers took a similar attitude, stating that pence comics were less desirable as they would be regarded as foreign over in the USA and so harder to sell.

Even so, there were not that many pure cents books around so pence books were often the only choice. By the early 1990s lots of Silver Age books were being brought over from the USA by visiting dealers and shop owners to sell here. Golden Age material and late 1940s/early 1950s books (virtually unseen in the UK up to that time) also began to make limited appearances. It seemed this flood of material was set to make pence books even less desirable. Yet ironically, some of us were starting to view pence copies in a much more positive light. There are two principle reasons for this.

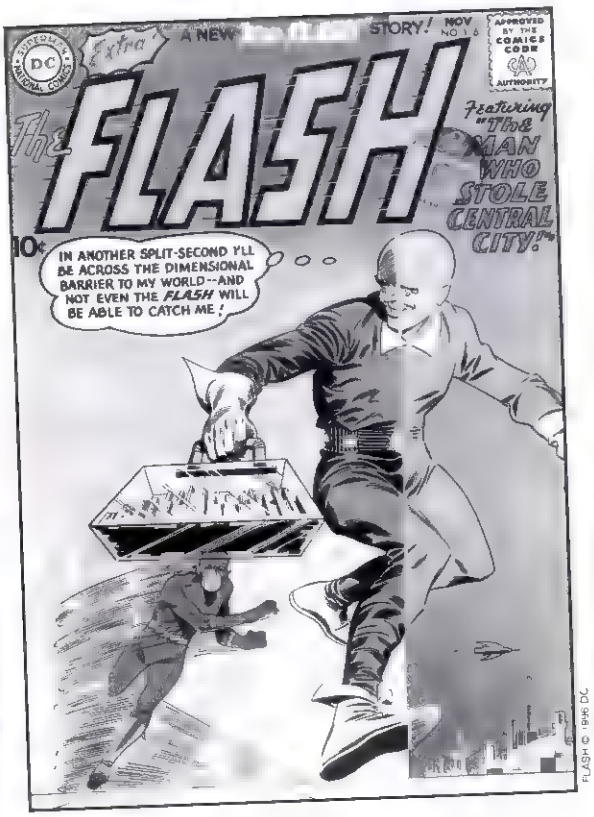
(1) There is the nostalgia factor. Those stamped covers can strike a chord in the memory, a reminder back to comic collecting roots, of choosing books off those old squeaky rotating racks in the newsagent or seaside store, all those years ago.

Tales of Suspense #25 actually printed with the 9d price for distribution only in Great Britain. Flash #116 & #117 with the famous 9d circle stamp. Note that the 9d price stamp was applied to these covers in a relatively unobtrusive location.

10¢
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
The FLASH
DEC. NO 117
9d
I KNEW I'D EVENTUALLY HAVE TO TANGLE WITH MY NEMESIS THE FLASH--THAT'S WHY I PREPARED THIS LIGHTNING-FAST BOOMERANG TO STREAK BACK AND KNOCK HIM OUT FROM BEHIND!
Featuring "HERE COMES CAPTAIN BOOMERANG!"

(2) Also, as pence copies have spent almost their whole existence over here in the moderate UK climate, they have mostly avoided the extreme heat and humidity which can damage them. The covers of pence comics usually have deep colours and their pages are almost always near white and supple. I have seen many examples of cents books of similar grade, brought over from the USA, with slightly faded covers and overall poorer page quality.

I believe the long-term prospects for pence comics is promising, at least over here in the UK. Though these issues will never attain the status of the highest grade cents copies, they may at least lose a lot of the negative stigma presently associated with them over the years to come. ■


Extra!
A NEW STORY!
NOV NO 116
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
The FLASH
Featuring "The MAN WHO STOLE CENTRAL CITY!"
10¢
IN ANOTHER SPLIT-SECOND I'LL BE ACROSS THE DIMENSIONAL BARRIER TO MY WORLD--AND NOT EVEN THE FLASH WILL BE ABLE TO CATCH ME!
FLASH © 1996 DC

THAT PRICE STAMP

We didn't mind in Britain in the '60s - not at all. An unsightly black ink stamped price on the covers? Who cared - we were finally seeing the marvelous American comics we loved so much in full colour, rather than the black and white reprints we'd been obliged to put up with. For a brief period, the British and Australian reprints of Batman, Superman, and Co. appeared in issues in which the original plates had been re-coloured abroad (often very creatively, with a larger colour palette than the originals – but with much carelessly missed detail.) But to have the real thing – well, it just didn't matter back then that thirty years down the line the value of these original US issues would be compromised by that nine pence price stamp

— BARRY FORSHAW

SOLVED

THE STRANGE CASE OF The Missing Four Colors!

The thirty-one Four Color Comics thought to be "missing" all these years aren't really missing at all!

By Duane Dimock

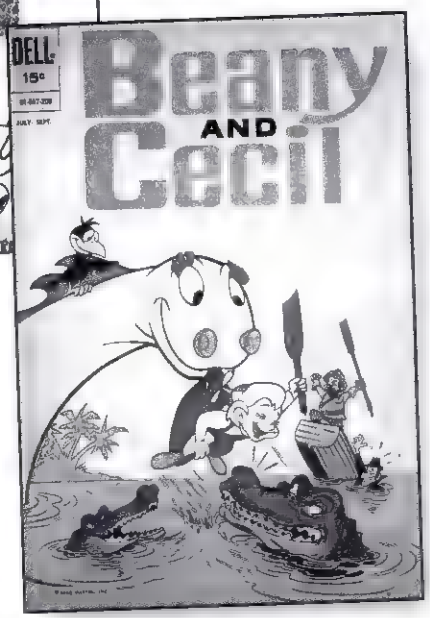
You've seen the phrase "Missing numbers probably do not exist" in the *Guide*'s Dell *Four Color* listing. There are 31 missing *Four Color* numbers between #1276 and #1354. Well, believe it or not, those missing numbers actually do exist! The next edition of the *Guide* might read "See page xxx for explanation of 'missing numbers'."

The *Four Color* series was Dell's "umbrella" title that presented different characters in each issue all through the 1940s and 1950s and into the early 1960s. Later in the 1960s, Don and Maggie Thompson (who were serious *Four Color* collectors)

The original art above shows that this Beany and Cecil cover was originally slated to appear as Four Color #1339, and the published cover on the right shows the new numbering system that listed the book as 01-057-209.

THE MISSING FOUR COLOR #1339

Hints: *Four Color* #1337 (Dr. Kildare) and *Four Color* #1341 (The Andy Griffith Show) are both dated 4/6, 1962 which would most likely date #1339 as the same. The next hint actually provides the key that clears up most of the mystery, and it is that all those 8-digit numbers on the Dell and Gold Key series that started as the *Four Color*s phased out–long thought to be a random or indecipherable sequencing–do offer exact and telling information.



The First Big Clue:

Unraveling the solution began with a recent 5,000 page (mostly Dell) original comic book art find. Three years ago I bought about 500 pages of this lot. The origin of such a large load is traced back to John Chilly, the art director of Dell Comics (1960-1965). John was the artist of nearly all the Alvin (& The Chipmunks) covers published during the early '60s and had acquired all this art during that time period. John died a few years back and the art was sold to one dealer. I was able to buy all the covers in the collection, which included compiled one of the first lists for the title. They made the assumption that the "missing numbers" that they could not account for had probably not been published. When Overstreet incorporated their list into his annual *Price Guide* he kept using that theory, which was–until recently–the best guess one could make.

The focus of this article is basically two-fold: First, to confirm that the *Four Colors* thought to be missing all these years aren't really missing at all! And second, to document which "titles" are actually the "missing" *Four Color* comics.

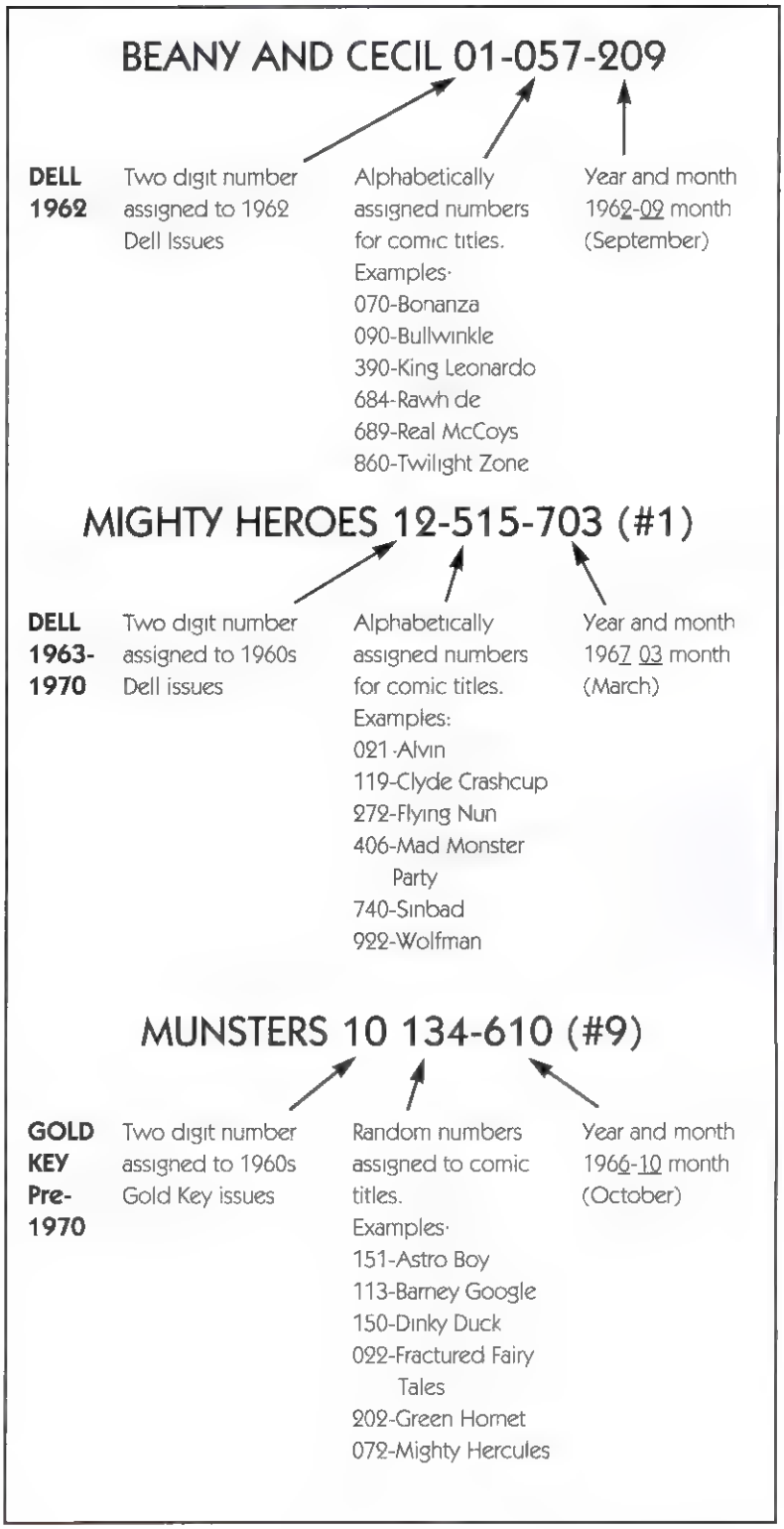
Dell's *Beany And Cecil* #01-057-209 which is also listed as #1. The "twice up" (15" X 22") line art has a few industry notations on it, but the standout information refers to "*FC* #1339." This means Front Cover (not *Four Color*) of issue #1339. This comic was slated to come out as *Four Color* #1339, but for whatever reasons the numbering system changed and the notation "01-057-209" was adopted and used .

Examples: Here's the way Dell and Gold Key used this new numbering system (see chart). Dell and Gold Key assigned a two digit general code based on era of publication. Then a three digit "title code" arbitrarily assigned to an alphabetical listing of their comic book titles. The third part of the code is "shorthand" for year and month of publication.

I have found 31 of the 1962 Dell numbers ending in the 207-210 sequence. All 31 comics are dated between May 1962 and October 1962. Working from the dates of existing *Four Colors*, the missing dates range from March 1962 to June 1962. It makes sense that since the missing numbers were not published as *Four Colors*, and that there would be a slight time lag caused by the change in the numbering system.

The 31 numbers plug into the 31 "missing" slots in a way that definitely solves the mystery. There could be a few other books that I missed that have 207-209 endings, but that would only prove the existence of several later *Four Colors* that have been listed as not existing (like #1355, or #1356, or #1357).

So assigning Beany and Cecil as *Four Color* #1339 leaves thirty other associations to be made between the *Four Color* numbering and the 8-digit system. But this "ice-breaker" turned out to be the data that cracked the code, and gave the solution to one of the most perplexing puzzles of comics history! ■

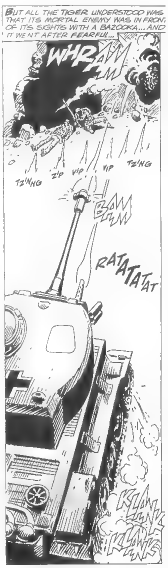


The chart above explains the "mysterious" Dell and Gold Key numbering system that has baffled collectors for years.

Duane Dimock owns a vast collection of cereal boxes, superhero collectibles, and other esoteric memorabilia. He and his wife Susan raise wabbits and reside in San Diego.

YOU'RE HIT "GRIN"! BUT DON'T WORRY--I'LL GET YOU OFF!
NOT EVERY-ONE COULD GET OFF THE BRIDGE...
NO... "BEAR IT"-- --YOU CAN'T... DO... ANYTHING FOR ME... NOW--SO... BEAT IT...

Horizontal and vertical panels from Our Army At War #136 (from page 4 and 9) illustrate Kuberts supreme ability to orchestrate contrasting shapes and formats into a unified "look".



JOE KUBERT

(*Continued from page 36*)

ful artist and storyteller. He applied great technique to storytelling, dramatization, and page composition. His techniques of attacking a story are things that I use now… and techniques I tell to anybody who's interested in getting into the business. I don't know why he never achieved the kind of accolades that I think that he really deserved.

Mort was a very shy guy, although preponderance of the people in our business (especially at that time) seem quite timorous. We all would be much happier if left alone and allowed to just do our work. I guess timid and shy is the best description.

SR: *Is Mort still alive?*

JK: I think he just died within the last year or two… so I'm told.

SR: *When did you go to DC?*

JK: I actually went to Gaines' outfit, *All-American*. It was the forerunner of EC … they were the publishers of *Flash* and *Hawkman* and others. Old man Gaines was still alive at that time, and I still remember him, not that I had much to do with him But I do remember him being up at the office once or twice. I was still going to high school at the time, and that's when I really got into the Hawkman series and The Flash series… doing covers and so on.

SR: *You take over Hawkman after Shelly Moldoff left?*

JK: Right. Right. I think I followed Moldoff exactly. I think he did about the first five or six issues, and I took it. I don't know why he left. At that time, Sheldon Mayer was the editor, and I was lucky to become involved with him. He kind of looked over me like a surrogate father, and he was the one that gave me the Flash and Hawkman to do.

I'm sure that I was influenced by everybody then, those three that I had mentioned before, plus guys like Lou Fine… everybody else you could think of. That which looked good to me were things that I tried to absorb and learn about, and kind of include in what I was trying to do. I guess I was jumping all around the place and the result was the work that I did at that time.

SR: *Were you working up at DC and various places throughout the war years?*

JK: Yes, and I would imagine that that's one of the reasons I was getting as much work as I did, because most of the other guys were in the Army, and I wasn't old enough yet. I came of age right around the end of the war. They caught me during the Korean thing. I was in from '50—'52, but I just missed World War II. I didn't see any action… I was working with Special Services drawing and doing those things which were helpful I guess for the troops or whatever.

I was lucky enough to have the time to do stuff for different publishers while I was in the Army. When I was in Germany I did stuff for Julie Schwartz, who was my editor prior to my going into the service. I also did work for Avon Publishing Company, who I was working for before I went into the service. I was busy

SR: *You must have known Julie Schwartz a long time.*

JK: I met Julie when he was a writer and an assistant editor up at All-American Comics. That's where we got to know each other.

SR: *Do you remember what year that was?*

JK: Well, let's see, I must have been about fifteen. That would put it about fifty-three years ago. Jesus, '41, '42. (*Laughs*) Something like that. We're still very good friends. He's still a very dear friend. He;s a wonderful guy, and ironically, enough, he never, never really liked my work… despite the fact that he'd give me a lot of stuff to do. Matter of fact, we talked about this later on. He felt that the figures that I did were distorted and out of proportion… and he was right. He was absolutely right. I just didn't see it at that time. But that really had no effect on our relationship. He was still of a hell of a nice guy. He was a gentleman as far as I was concerned, and continues to be today.

SR: *What kind of stuff were you doing for Julie?*

JK: Well, Julie had taken over The Flash and Hawkman and I had continued to do work for him. In fact, what they called the Silver Age Flash (in Showcase) was penciled by Carmine Infantino. I inked that.

SR: *Did you work much with Infantino?*

JK: Yes. I did. There weren't a lot of people whose work I inked. A matter of fact, I had the opportunity to ink on Jack Kirby's pencils when he was doing Newsboy Legion. It was when I was a kid, years and years ago. But I did work on his stuff. I inked for a lot of people, I mentioned Mort Meskin

and Carmine. We did a whole bunch of Jesse James books before he became publisher. I've known Carmine forever. As a matter of fact, he was an usher at my wedding.

SR: *I must say, you working on Infantino was a nice combination. You gave his work a kind of gritty quality that it never had with other inkers.*

JK: Well, I enjoyed it. Carmine is a fantastic penciler, a fantastic storyteller and designer, and I learned a lot inking on his stuff. It was a pleasure working on it. Our arrangement was a very healthy one. I felt before I started inking his stuff I could tell Carmine, "When I take this stuff over, it's no longer yours. It's mine… and what occurs with the inking is completely and totally my responsibility."

And with that understanding we worked very well. Carmine would do what he felt resulted in a good set of pencils. When I took it, it was my job from that point on. I didn't feel any pressure to do it any particular way, other than my own way. If I had felt that there were changes in the artwork or anything, I had the freedom to do that.

SR: *You also worked for St. John around '50 to '55.*

JK: That's right. Archer St. John, who was the owner of that company, was somebody that I worked for prior to going into the service. That was in about 1950. When I got out of the Army, he was very happy to have me come back. I was actually packaging books for him… that is, we were co-publishers, and I was paid a royalty based on the sales of the books in addition to page rates.

When I came back, my buddy Norman came with me… that's when I put out the first Tor books. Norman did The Three Stooges. We pounded out the first 3-D comic book.

SR: *How did that came about?*

JK: I was in the Army in Germany I had come across a magazine of photographs that included these red and green 3-D glasses. Three-dimensional art and graphics had been around for decades, even at the turn of the century stereoscopes were in existence

When I got out of the Army, Norm and I started working together. We started to publish this stuff through the St. John Publishing Company. We saw the number of titles that were around, and we tried to figure out what we could do that would look different on the stands and compete well with what was already out there.

I remembered the stuff that I had seen in Europe, and I said, "Gee, wouldn't it be great if we could do this in linework, or cartoons… and make the cartoons pop off the pages the way I had seen in Europe." But our first reaction was, "Ah, well, it can't be done… there's just no way." Then I and Norm and Norman's brother worked on it and worked on it until we were able to achieve the ability of producing 3D artwork so that it could be sold at a feasible price. That's how we did it.

SR: *About how long did it take you to work out the technical bugs?*

JK: Probably took the better part of a month. We worked out the procedure that we felt would do it, then we made some samples. Our first sample drawings included a picture of Tor and a picture of the Three Stooges, (which we were already publishing with St. John). When we showed Archer St. John the effects that we had, he flipped! He said, "Well, look, instead of going with characters that are not really well known, can you convert this entire Mighty Mouse book into 3-D?" He was also licensing Mighty Mouse at that time and had a whole book ready to go. And we said, "Sure!"

Norman and I sat down… Jesus this was work. It took us three days and three nights without sleep. I remember that vividly because after staying awake for 72 hours you feel like you're walking on marshmallows. It's like your legs are two feet off the ground and you're not quite touching the ground.

After we finished all of the artwork, we went down to the engravers, converting it into the 3-D procedure. We made sure that they shot it correctly in the camera because that's where the effects actually take place, in the engraving. And that's how we put out the first 3-D book.

SR: *I talked to Angelo Torres about working on the EC 3-D stuff. He said it was an incredible pain in the neck, especially with the overlays and the whiteout flaking off.*

JK: It was. The mistake the publishers made (in their rush to make as much money as possible in as short a time as possible) was to sell the 3-D gimmick on everything and anything. Our first 3-D books sold a million and a quarter. That was an incredible sale, especially at twenty-five cents a shot

SR: *Did you and Maurer have a piece of this?*

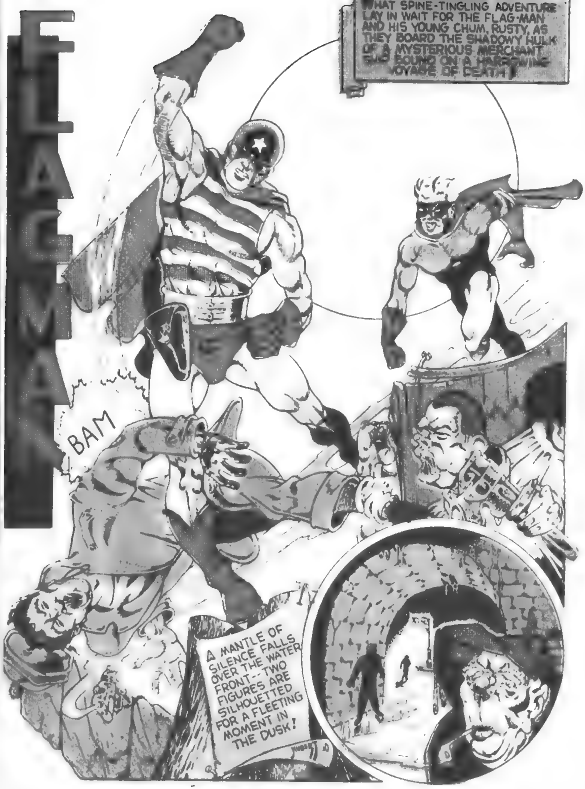
JK: Oh, yeah.

SR: *Boy, that must have been like Christmas.*

JK: It was Christmas. New Year's, and the Fourth of July all wrapped up into one. It was great. But when St. John saw the numbers of those first sales, he took every one of his books and converted it to 3-D. By the time the sixth or seventh publication came out, the sales plummeted… and because the investment was so high to begin with and having to sell the book for twenty-five cents apiece, it really hurt him. It hurt everybody. DC and a whole bunch of other places tried to do it. They all did miserably.

LIKE A FRAGILE SPARROW, THE BLUE AND WHITE WINGED AVENGER FLUTTERED FRANTICALLY UNDER THE LASHING OF MY TWIN SPANDAUS--UNTIL...
RATATA
THE FRENCHMAN WAS A GALLANT OPPONENT! HE IS SALUTING ME THROUGH THE SMOKE THAT IS HIS AIRCRAFT!
JOE KUBERT

The creation of the Enemy Ace was a high point in the Kanigher/Kubert team-up. Above is a "signature" panel from Our Army At War #151 (Feb 1965).


FLAG-MAN
WHAT SPINE-TINGLING ADVENTURE LAY IN WAIT FOR THE FLAG-MAN AND HIS YOUNG CHUM, RUSTY, AS THEY BOARD THE SHADOWY HULK OF A MYSTERIOUS MERCHANT SHIP BOUND ON A HAIR-RAISING VOYAGE OF DEATH?
BAM
A MANTLE OF SILENCE FALLS OVER THE WATER FRONT - TWO FIGURES ARE SILHOUETTED FOR A FLEETING MOMENT IN THE DUSK!

COURTESY THE PHIL BARNHART COLLECTION

Some of Kubert's earliest and rarest work was published by Holyoke. This "Flag-Man" splash panel hails from Captain Aero #4 (Apr 1942).

The 3-D craze lasted perhaps six months. Within six months it was dead.

SR: *You did a Tor comic in that format.*

JK: Yeah. I did several in fact.

SR: *Do the separations from book still exist? Would it be possible to reprint it?*

JK: Oh, yeah. They have been reprinted. DC reprinted all of them.

SR: *The 3-D books?*

JK: Yeah, in the last, I would say, fifteen years or so.

SR: *I remember seeing the Tor reprint book in the seventies. it seemed like you did new covers and some new framing sequences.*

JK: That's correct.

SR: *I could tell the difference in your style.*

JK: (*Laughs*) Thank God. (*Laughs*)

SR: *After you worked with St. John, it seemed like you went on to work almost exclusively with DC for a long time.*

JK: Yeah… probably about '53 I think, is when I started, with Bob (Kanigher). And I started doing stuff with him and he kept me busy as hell until I left DC. I think that was when I took on the Green Beret strip. I was gone for about two years, and then I came back. I worked with Bob again for a short time, and then Bob got sick and I took over the editorial chores.

SR: *Did you create Sgt. Rock or did Bob Kanigher?*

JK: Bob. Absolutely, Bob. Any idea that you come up with had to start with the text or writing first. It does not start with the drawing. As I'm concerned, you don't just sit down and design a character by drawing him. You've got to really flesh him out first so that you get a feel for what this guy is. What he's supposed to look like is based on his actions and reactions. Bob came up with the idea of Sgt. Rock. Bob was the one who wrote the Sgt. Rock script for years. All I did was illustrate them.

Enemy Ace was Bob's idea too I thought it was very well-written. It was a terrific idea. He was a terrific writer. He still is.

SR: *Did Kanigher write any of the Hawkman stuff you were doing back in the forties?*

JK: Yes. He was working with Julie Schwartz as a matter of fact at the same time, I think he was working for *All-American Comics*. That's how far back our relationship goes.

SR: *Why was Gardner Fox assigned the writer on Hawkman when it was revived in the early sixties?*

JK: Bob had then become a full-fledged editor, handling a score of other books at DC, and Gardner was working for Julie, and Julie was handling the Hawkman characters. Very often I would be working for

both editors at the same time. It wasn't as if anybody had an exclusive in any way. If I had time, I would do a Sgt. Rock. If I had time, I would do whatever the hell came down. I worked for Jack Schiff, too, on certain books that he wanted to have done. Whenever I had the time for, I'd do.

SR: *What was your output in an average week?*

JK: Oh, gosh, I don't know. It depends, really. I think that any artist, any person, regardless of what kind of work you're doing really you don't know what you can do unless you're pushed to do it. You'd be amazed. I recall when I was a kid, about fifteen or sixteen, Bob Wood and Charlie Biro were publishing *Crime Does Not Pay* and *Daredevil*. I was still attending high school, and they had to publish a book, I mean they had a deadline on a book, a thirty-two, or a forty-eight pager. It had to be done in twenty-four hours and it had not even been written yet.

What Charlie did was to get a whole bunch of guys together, including me and my buddy Norman… Bob Wood (writing) and Irv Watanabe (lettering)… at that time. Charlie would be writing the stuff while Bob was breaking it down into pencil form and Irv was lettering it… at the same time! Norm and I were inking.

We were in a hotel room doing this damn thing, and we worked right through the night, twenty-four straight hours. We got the thing done. So you don't really know how much you can do until you're strapped to do it.

It was a real production line, I mean it was going like crazy. It wasn't the best job in the world, I don't think, but it was done.

SR: *You did a little bit of work for Harvey Kurtzman on his EC war books.*

JK: I think I did two stories for Harvey. I also think I did another book, Trump. It was another humor book similar to *MAD*. I think it was being published through Playboy.

Harvey never really liked my stuff… it just didn't work for him and the material that he was doing. It sure as heck didn't come anywhere near the kind of stuff that he got from a Jack Davis and Wally Wood and people like that. They were extraordinary.

SR: *And yet one of the things you're most known for is your excellent war work.*

JK: Well, you know, it's nice to be recognized for that kind of stuff, but when I tried working with the stuff that Harvey had given me, I just felt hog-tied, and it just didn't work out well.

SR: *Because of his system of layouts?*

JK: Exactly. Again, Harvey Kurtzman was a very, very dear friend., and a good friend. We got together very often. Every time we did it was great. As a matter of fact, he graduated from the High School of Music and Art, I think, about two years before I did. We got along fine, and he never said anything negative way, ever, as far as my work was concerned, but I just knew he wasn't too crazy about it

SR: *You know, I've never heard anyone say anything bad about Harvey Kurtzman.*

JK: Yeah. A sweet man. Very sweet man.

SR: *Yeah. He's certainly missed. Anyway, on to DC. You were mainly concentrating on Sgt. Rock after a certain period? Let's say from about early sixties on?*

JK: Yes.

SR: *Did that ever get old, just doing the war stuff over and over?*

JK: If it did, I don't recall it. I think that it's something that I speak to novices about. The fact of the matter is, I think it's the responsibility of the artist, whatever story is that he gets, to commit himself find some way of generating enthusiasm and interest in what he's doing. If you don't, then the job that you're doing is going to reflect that lack of enthusiasm, and there's nothing worse than that.

When it comes to a situation where you're just knocking out a job, the guy who suffers is the artist. Many of people who've you've spoken to about me have lauded me for Sgt. Rock. Their assumption is that I've done the story, the writing… which is really not true. All I do is just illustrate the darn thing. But I did generate the enthusiasm I felt was necessary in every story that I did, and I do generate that consciously.

This is the kind of work that, unless you really love it, unless you really enjoy what you're doing, it becomes an almost impossible situation. Artists like us sit behind a drawing table eight hours a day, ten hours a day, twelve hours a day. My sons do the same thing. Nobody chains you down to the place… nobody ties you there… nobody forces you to do it! If you don't enjoy what you're doing, the worst place in the world to be is sitting at that table and drawing if you really don't want to be there.

I'm sure it applies to any artform. I don't care if it's writing or music. If you're being pushed to do something that you don't really want to do, even though you love the medium, you're going to feel it's a drag.

SR: *Sometimes you can look at a job and just tell they didn't have their heart in it.*

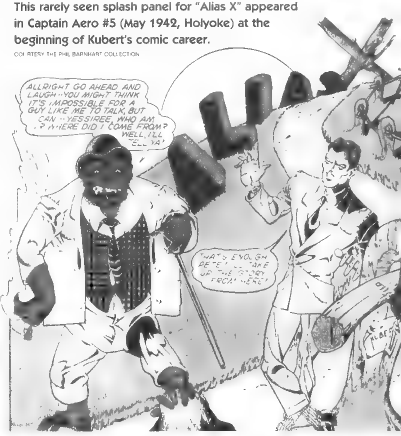
JK: That's right, just batted it out. That's where the term comes from, just bat it out. Just a bunch of drawings, and they mean nothing.

SR: *Well, Joe, let me talk about your school. It opened in '76, I believe. What inspired you to open a cartooning school?*

JK: Well, I wouldn't put it on such a high, vaunted level as being an inspiration. It was an idea, a thought that I had had for years Before I started the school, I had seen a lot of young people (like myself when I started out) with a tremendous desire to want to do this kind of stuff… and they didn't have an inkling of an idea of how to go about it. So I thought "if there was one place that a person could come to be able to acquire all the abilities

This rarely seen splash panel for "Alias X" appeared in Captain Aero #5 (May 1942, Holyoke) at the beginning of Kubert's comic career.

COURTESY THE PHIL BARNHART COLLECTION


ALLRIGHT GO AHEAD AND LAUGH-YOU MIGHT THINK IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR A GUY LIKE ME TO TALK, BUT CAN I HESSIREE, WHO AM I, WHERE DID I COME FROM? WELL, I'LL TELL YA!
THAT'S ENOUGH BE-BOP! SO THAT'S WHERE YOU COME FROM-HERE!

necessary to make a living in this business, wouldn't that be great!"

And the school wasn't done to take the place of my career, I felt I could handle both I could never stop drawing. The school is really about my experiences and the way I learned how to get into this business.

In the three years that a person attends the school here, they learn the same as it would take them ten to fifteen years to acquire out there. Acquiring it on the outside means having to catch people in the process of doing it to learn. Here at the school, they have access to all the instructors to learn all the things that are necessary to make a living.

SR: *Well, aside from yourself, who is currently teaching there?*

JK: We have about thirty instructors. We have people like Irwin Hasen and Tex Blaisdell. Dick Giordano worked here for six or seven years. A whole bunch of people (*Laughs*) I'm afraid to mention because, sure as shooting, I'm going to forget somebody.

SR: *I know a bunch of the graduates. Tom Yeates… Steve Bissette.*

JK: Right. I'm very proud of the guys that have come out, Steve Bissette (as you've mentioned), Rick Veitch, Tom Mandrake, Jan Durseema, and Carl Kesel. Many have gone to the school are doing very, very well. Marvel Comics has set up a full three-year scholarship for one student coming in every year.

I think the school is more successful than I ever dreamed it would be We have about approxmately three hundred students who attend now. I never thought it would get to that kind of a size… and our employment ratio is better than 90% of every student that's come out of here, working, as a result of what they've learned.

SR: *You also teach animation.*

JK: Not only just animation, we're essentially teaching communication with graphics… being able to tell a story regardless of what media style.

This extends to advertising, book illustration, comic books , strip syndication, storyboards, political cartoons… you name it. Anywhere in the commercial art world where that kind of communication is necessary. Animation is a separate school here.

SR: *Was doing the Burroughs properties* (Tarzan) *for DC back in the early seventies your idea?*

JK: Nope. In fact, I've been told that the reason that Burroughs brought the character over to DC was because they wanted me to do the Tarzan character, which was very gratifying for me. It was a great pleasure.

When they offered me it, it was déjà vu kind of thing, coming back to the character that was really an inspiration for me when I was a kid. Being able to get back to Foster Tarzan was great.

SR: *Why did it eventually come to an end?*

JK: I think I was editing about ten to fifteen books a month at that time, including trying to draw Tarzan. When it got difficult to maintain a schedule with me drawing the Tarzan, I used to break the stories down, and then send those things to Philippine artists to do it. Eventually it got to a point where there was no more pleasure in it.

SR: *Were you the one who pulled the plug on it, then?*

JK: I think I stepped, away, I don't recall, really. It would be hard for me to say. I would imagine that the reason that it was stopped is the reason that every book is stopped, and that is because it just wasn't selling.

SR: *Nonetheless, those DC Tarzans were beautiful work. So was Mike Kaluta's Carson of Venus.*

JK: It was a funny… Mike Kaluta came in brand-new, very enthusiastic about doing the Burroughs material, especially that particular character. Anyhow, he asked me if he could transcribe page for page… word for word, the Burroughs material. He was going to do it in six page segments. He was so involved and loved it so much, I said, "Mike, go ahead and do it. It sounds great to me."

SR: *And Murphy Anderson did some really wonderful work on John Carter.*

JK: He sure did Murphy also asked to do it, because he loved that character so much. He really wanted to do it. And those are other guys that I thought did fantastic work during the time I was editing. Guys who really did outstanding work like Sam Glanzman. Sam did a whole series on a cruiser, similar to the one that he served on during World War II. Sam's done some great work over the years

SR: *How old is Sam? Is he a contemporary of yours?*

JK: I guess Sam is maybe a year or two older than I I just squeaked through, squeaked by, not getting drafted. I think, during World War II, but I think Sam got caught.

SR: *Was that actually his ship he depicted in the series? The Stevens?*

JK: Oh, yeah . . and most of the experiences that he had, if they were not absolutely described as true, were all based on fact. I loved the stuff he did. I thought he did some fantastic work on the things that he brought in when he was doing the Stevens stuff for me.

SR: *It also seemed that his style went nicely with the style you'd established.*

JK: I can't recognize that. All I know is that I loved his work, and I still do, and again, he is probably one of the most talented, sweetest guys you ever want to meet. A hell of a nice guy.

SR: *What was it like doing the Green Beret strip back in the sixties??*

JK: The worst kinds of deadlines you can imagine are those that are involved in doing for syndicated strip I don't care if it's humor or straight stuff or whatever the hell it is. But if its a syndicated strip, where you have a deadline virtually every day, you work

With comic books, if you don't do enough in one day, you can do twice as much the next day, because the books come out once a month… so you have some time to play with it. But a syndicated strip comes out every day, and you've got a deadline every day!

Some love the deadlines. To me, it was a horror, but I did it.

SR: *In closing I wanted to ask if there one particular strip or character of yours that you consider a favorite and why?*

JK: Well, the only things that are my favorites are the ones that I'm working on now. I try anyhow, to invest myself completely in that particular job. Some people have said, "You must have loved doing Sgt. Rock. It seems that that's where you had your main interests." Not true. I approached the Rock like any of the other strips that I've done, by generating the enthusiasm that I felt was necessary. I guess that kind of also generates emotion in what I was doing. So those are my favorites the one I'm doing at that time, because I devote myself completely and totally to them. I'm also interested in everything. I think anybody who wants to get into this form of art, or any area of art, needs to be. A lot of young people wanting to be cartoonists figure that all they have to do is just draw these pictures and they'll be successful. They don't realize that the more that they learn about everything… geography, history, the sciences, all these things are brought into the work and is reflected in the work. What's going on today and years ago interests me. Literature, poetry, music… all of these things are of great interest to me.

SR: *Thanks for taking the time to talk with* CBM *readers Joe, I look forward to seeing the Fax from Sarajevo book. In fact, I look forward to everything you do. You're one of my favorite artists.*

JK: Thank you very much, Steve. ■

DC's Special Artist!

A guide to Kubert reprints in DC Special

Second Time Around is a CBM feature that spotlights great bargains in comic book reprints! —**By Shawn Hamilton**

WHEN WE REVIEW THE COUNTLESS NAMES OF THOSE WHO have contributed to the comic book art form, only a handful can be called legendary. Of that handful, few are more accomplished or more deserving of the of acclaim than the great Joe Kubert!

Although he is one of the quintessential Silver Age artists, his impact on comic readers goes clear back to the Golden Age! During the mid and late 1940s, his dynamic art style was turning heads at numerous companies throughout the industry. His early work for Avon, St. John, and DC are especially noteworthy, and he is credited as the originator of the 3-D comic!

His phenomenal Silver Age work is universally acclaimed, most notably for Viking Prince, Hawkman, Sgt. Rock, and Tarzan.

For an incredible six decades, Joe Kubert has established himself as one of the best and most beloved comic book artist in fandom. He even founded the now internationally famous School of Cartoon Art as a way of passing his knowledge and experience on to future generations of artists.

Joe Kubert's contributions to DC are, in my opinion, some of the best that were ever done, most notable from 1955-61! But alas, most of this work appears in 10¢ cover price books, many of which can be both pricey and hard to find.

But thrifty readers can circumvent this challenge by checking out the excellent Kubert reprints in the title *DC Special* – a 29 issue series that ran inconsistently from October 1968 through September. 1977. Kubert reprints were featured in eight issues, with two of the issues #5 (a KUBERT tribute) and #12 (a Viking Prince special) being absolute necessities for any comic collection. Turns out *DC Special* is just that… special, especially when it comes to Kubert reprints!

DC Special #5 (Oct/Dec. 1969) - "The Secret Lives of Joe Kubert." (1) "The Cartoonist… At Home" (new, 4 pgs.) First appearance of Adam and Andy Kubert, they appear in the story as themselves, (2) Sgt. Rock in "Eyes of a Blind Gunner" reprinted from *Our Army At War* #113 (Dec. 1961, 13 pgs.); (3) "Rider of the Winds" reprinted from *Showcase* #2 (May/Jun 1956, 8 pgs.); (4) Hawkman in "Menace of the Matter Master" reprinted from *Brave & Bold* #35 (Apr/May 1961, 12 pgs.); (5) Kubert showcases his changing style by rendering Golden Age characters in his style from that specific year. (2 pgs.); (6) Viking Prince in "Threat of the Ice King" reprinted from: *Brave & Bold* #18 (Jun/Jul 1958, 13 pgs.)

DC Special #6 (Jan/Mar 1970) - "The Wild Frontier" (1) Buffalo Bill in "Young Bill of the Pony Express" reprinted from Frontier Fighters #6 (Jan 1956, 8 pgs.) Note: The splash page has been reduced to 1/4 page to accommodate new framing art by Gil Kane

DC Special #8 (Jul/Sep 1971) - "Wanted: The World's Most Dangerous Villains" (1) Hawkman in "Shadow Thief of Midway City!" reprinted from: *Brave & Bold* #36 Jun/Jul 1961, 12 pgs.)

DC Special #12 (May/Jun 1971) - "The Viking Prince" (1) Viking Prince in "Battle for the Dragon Ship" reprinted from Brave & Bold #1 Aug/Sep 1955, 9 pgs.) Note: This is the characters first appearance; (2) Viking Prince in "The Ice Dragon" reprinted from *Brave & Bold* #5 (Apr/May 1956, 8 pgs.); (3) Viking Prince in "The Viking and the Mermaid" reprinted from: *Brave & Bold* #16 (Feb/Mar 1958, 13 pgs.) note: This issue also reprints the other two features from *Brave & Bold* #1.

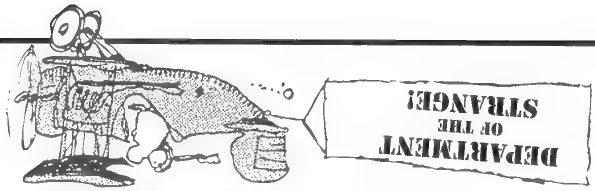
DC Special #22 (Jun/Jul 1976) - "Presents The Three Musketeers and Robin Hood" (1) Viking Prince in "The Viking Genie" reprinted from *Brave & Bold* #15 (Dec/Jan 1958, 8 pgs.)

DC Special #25 (Dec/Jan 1977) "Presents The Three Musketeers and Robin Hood" (1) Viking Prince in "The Outcast Viking" reprinted from: *Brave & Bold* #8 Oct/Nov 1956, 6 pgs.)

DC Special #26 Feb/Mar 1977 - "Enemy Ace" (1) Enemy Ace in "The Devil's General" reprinted from: *Star Spangled War Stories* #143 (Feb/Mar 1969, 18 pgs); (2) Enemy Ace in "Enemy Ace" reprinted from. *Our Army At War* #151 (Feb 1965, 15 pgs.) Note. First appearance of character… although these stories do not fall into our original time frame, they are nonetheless beautiful examples of Kubert's war stories.

So there you have it! An instant collection of "Kubert Klassics" with a current *Overstreet* Value of more than $6,000… which can be had via reprints for a mere $44 in NM (and less than $10 if you aren't condition conscious). Until next time, health and happiness and keep searching those sale boxes!!! ■

References: Don Rosa's Brave & Bold *Index: Jon Ingersoll's Index to* DC Special; *and* The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide.



HERBIE VS. FIDEL

BY LOU MOUGIN

Now that Communism has come apart at the seams, historians and political analysts will be pounding out books for decades arguing the reasons why. Was it the détente of the Nixon era? The get-tough stance of Reagan? The charisma and Glasnost of Gorbachev? Or was it…could it have been…Herbie Popnecker? This thesis is no idle speculation. For in *Herbie* #1, back in '64, we learn of the long-suppressed Cuban incident that even the Washington Post has never unearthed: "Herbie Beards Castro!"

It all begins with Pincus Popnecker (I don't make these names up, folks) reading in the sports page about Sonny Liston training for a fight with Cuban boxer Pablo Popsicle. Moreover, the pugilistic Popsicle declares that, whether he is licked or not, his share of the purse--and probably several hundred product seals--are going to ransom Cuban underground leader Juan Buanana, being held captive by Castro with his cronies (undoubtedly known as the Buanana Bunch. Pincus asks his wife for permission to go to Miami to see the fight. She informs him that she's going as well—and so is Herbie. Pincus puts his foot down about that and she puts her foot atop his and that's that.

At Miami, after sending every beach-bunny out of her mind with desire when he treads the sand in a bathing suit, Herbie accompanies his dad to see Liston train. Liston stops the training bout to oust Herbie from the bleachers, claiming the kid's "puttin' a hex on me. I can't stand lookin' at him!" They go to watch Pablo Popsicle train. Pablo is almost of the same girth as Herbie, and setting him up against Sonny Liston in '64 conjures up visions of THE HARDER THEY FALL, the old Bogart boxing movie. Fortunately for Pablo, he snatches a lollipop from Herbie, sucks it, gains anti-gravity powers, and sails out a window, headed for China.

The trainers are beside themselves, for without a fight there will be no funds to appeal Buanana. But, squatting on a ring post like a Buddha-sentinel, Herbie declares to them, "Your fighter will show up for the fight. I GUARANTEE it!"

Actually, Herbie just slaps on a fake mustache. Sonny whacks him once, gets a very sore fist, and takes one return punch which knocks him to the ceiling. Liston is out for the count. But Herbie, noticing his dad notice him, produces a disappearing lollipop and makes like the invisible man. Since one fighter had vanished before the count was over--and such an occurrence must be somewhere in the rule books--Liston is still champ. Like the true American patriot he is, Herbie walks on air to Cuba, a one man invasion squad. He disguises himself in a fake beard and dungarees and is mistaken for Fidel Castro by the guards of the capitol building, though one of them does wonder why Fidel has taken to wearing glasses.

Once in Castro's office, Herbie commences bargaining with Fidel himself. But the dictator refuses to trade Buanana for a cool 10,000,000 lollipops, and has Herbie given the old heave-ho. He lands hard. His lollipops are crushed. But, like Reed Richards, Herbie can come through in a punch, and cements all his fragmented lollipops into one multi-powered one...what its awesome powers are, only Odin could guess.

Herbie goes in search of the key to the local jail where Buanana is being held. The master jailer of Cuba is a beautiful woman who likes to dance in bars, but has not yet found a suitable partner. But that was before she met Herbie Popnecker, who could give James Bond lessons in romance. Clad in a dancer's outfit, Herbie executes a flawless tango with the lady and slips the key off a cord around her neck. With it, he frees Juan Buanana, only to find that they are surrounded by Castro's guards. Herbie resorts to his composite lollipop, and places it to his lips. In an ending worthy of Stan Lee, Herbie finds he has super-high jumping power and super drilling power, sending him and Buanana for a short jaunt underground (the Devil pops up and curses him by name) and then topside again, skipping over the Atlantic Ocean, adored by mermaids who only wished he had a tail. Buanana is dropped right in an anti-Castro rally in Miami, and Herbie flits through the window of his motel room. Only seconds later, his parents enter, all unsuspecting, and his father berates him, as always, for being a little Fat Nothing.

Of such unknown heroism was the Cold War built. When all the names of America's secret heroes are revealed, one will stand before such names as Wild Bill Donovan, Richard Helms, and Maxwell Smart...the name of Herbie Popnecker, America's ace agent, who put a lollipop into the waiting hand of Lady Liberty...and convinced Castro never to wear glasses, so that they would never again think he was Herbie. ■

PULLING RANK!

One of the most frequently asked questions I've entertained over the years is "what makes a particular comic valuable?". My stock answer is usually "any collectible is worth precisely what someone else will pay for it". While that simplistic statement is undoubtedly true, there are a lot of factors at play that dictate how much that "someone else" is willing to pay. Also, different factors may affect different genres. That is to say, factors that affect the price of Golden Age books may be (and probably are) quite different than the factors affecting Silver Age prices. I'd like to spend a little time looking at these.

First, let's do away with the concept of grade. You know… I know… we all know many comics are common and undesirable in low grade but scarce and sought after in high grade. I don't want to talk about that. I don't want to discuss the value of a low grade *Avengers* #4 compared with a high grade copy. Nor do I want to compare and contrast high grade vs. low grade in general. I do want to look at why *Spidey* #1 is more sought after than *Avengers* #1. I don't want to debate the merits of a VF/NM *Amazing Fantasy* #15 vs. a NM *Spidey* #1 vs. a F/VF *Showcase* #4. Nor do I want to cross genres (although it does seem crazy to me that a virtually flawless NM/M *Sensation* #1 with blazing white pages and covers should sell for less than the White Mountain copy of *Amazing Fantasy* #15! I'll save that topic for another issue.)

When I bring up the topic of value with dealers and collectors (and I have), I usually get the old scarcity argument… until they give the question some thought.

Quite frankly, I'm tired of hearing how scarcity is soooooo important in determining price. The single most important criterion determining a comic's value is desirability. Period. What needs to be examined are the factors that make a particular book or genre of books desirable. Of course, if a desirable book is also very scarce it's value escalates rapidly. It's also true that a few books have some value simply because they are scarce, but those books are few in number. I do NOT disagree that scarcity is an important consideration, but I argue that demand is more important!

As an example, I'll trot out *Atomic Rabbit* #1 again. As far as I know, only Kevin Lashmit and myself are crazy about the *Atomic Rabbit* run. We've found the #1 issue to be impossible to find in any grade. There seems to be thousands more copies of *Avengers* #1, *Spider-Man* #1, and *Daredevil* #1 than *Atomic Rabbit* #1.

But the Bunny ain't worth squat!! Why? Because there are only about two people on this planet that want the book!! There is no demand for this scarce book, hence there is no value. (Of course, if all the Silver Age collectors ever wise up and demand *Atomic Rabbit* #1 its value will skyrocket. But that's not likely to happen.)

And what about *Uncle Scrooge* #17? There's another book almost impossible to find, but worth very little. Why? Not that many people want it. If there were 20,000 hard core Scrooge completists, this book could easily jump to $300–$500… but there aren't. Again, no demand.

Why is *Spidey* #1 so much more in demand than, say, *Action* #252… or *Action* #242… or *Journey Into Mystery* #90? Certainly scarcity can't explain it, so what does?

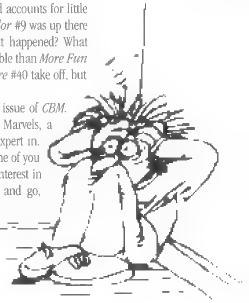
Dr. Keith puts a new spin on an old question... "Which Marvel key ranks #1?"

Look at the Golden Age, Captain Marvel was far and away the biggest selling super hero character of the 1940s, far out selling all the Timely characters. In fact, as involved as I was in comics in the late '50s and early '60s, I had never even heard of Captain America or the Submariner until Marvel brought them back. Yet, I sure knew who the Big Red Cheese was!!

Why are Timely's, across the board, five to ten times as expensive as Fawcetts? Why does a relatively common Golden Age key like *Captain America* #1 sell for soooo much more (and much more rapidly) than the rarer *Whiz* #2 (#1)? *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* sold upwards of 2,000,000 copies an issue yet you can pick up decent copies of these 40-50 year old books in the $2–$20 range.

Certainly, popularity or original demand accounts for little of current value. In the early '70s *Four Color* #9 was up there with *Action* #1 and *Superman* #1. What happened? What makes *More Fun* #52 so much more valuable than *More Fun* #55 or *Sensation* #1? What made *Adventure* #40 take off, but not *Adventure* #61?

But those questions I'll save for a later issue of *CBM*. This time, I want to focus on Silver Age Marvels, a genre I unabashedly consider myself an expert in. I've been around long enough (I know some of you are saying "Way too long") to have seen interest in certain Silver Age books and titles come and go, resurface again… only to die a short time later. Yet, many (if not most) are consistent over the long run, the reason being the forces that make them valuable are consistent over a long period of time.



by Dr. J. Keith Contarino

CONTARINO'S CORNER

These forces appear to me to be twofold. First, the vast number of purchasers of Silver Age comics today grew up either with the original characters/titles or from spin-offs of the originals. Second, events that take place currently have an enormous effect on the prices of the originals. A few examples should clarify this.

Look at *X-Men* #1, or for that matter, *X-Men* #1-65. I know some of you will find this hard to believe, but not only was *X-Men* the worst received original Marvel title (with the exception of *Hulk* which was canceled after a mere six issues), but in the late 1970s was a true "dog" as far as sales were concerned (pardon my veterinary reference). Then, all of a sudden, *X-Men* #1 became popular again. Why? Because of *X-Men* #108-143, that's why.

Notice I left out #94-107. I did this because the new *X-Men* didn't get really hot until John Byrne took over the title. The Cockrum issues were good; but the Byrne issues made this title go nuts. A similar thing happened with *Spider-Man*. While early *Spidey's* have always been popular, they didn't go crazy until the Punisher became so popular and spun off new titles. Spidey, of course, was so solid a character that after the initial re-boost around 1985 from the Punisher, there were even more spin-off Spidey titles!

Silver Age collectors and investors place a great deal on the concept of importance. Clearly, the most important characters in the comic market today are Spider-Man and the X-Men. (Go to any comic store and look at this month's Marvels for sale. It seems most of the titles are Spider-Man or X titles. I sometimes get the impression if it were not for Spider-Man and the new X-Men, there'd be no Marvel Comics today.)

If you go back to the 1960s and '70s, *Fantastic Four* #1 was the keystone Marvel. It was the first... and considered by most to be the most important. It was not supplanted by *Amazing Fantasy* #15 until the mid to late '80s and now even lags behind *Spider-Man* #1 in value.

Hulk #1 has also been classically viewed as a tremendously important book, and also as being hard to find due to the fact that the original run only lasted six issues. Today, it's not considered nearly as important. It's still a good seller and will remain so, especially in high grade.

Tales To Astonish #27 was a HUGE book in the 1970s but now is almost a "who-cares book" retaining most of its importance by being one of only three 10¢ cover price Marvel superhero books and (like the first issue of *Fantastic Four*) only one of two first appearance and origin issues with a 10¢ cover price. Antman was not a well-received character and if not for the Wonderful Wasp (sigh) I'd relegate the Antman appearances even below my utter contempt and disdain for the Legion Of Super Heroes. (Naaa-actually, I hold nothing to be lower than the Legion with the possible exception of Roberto Alomar! Please Legion-lovers, it's just my opinion.)

Over time, the rest of the key Marvels have waxed and waned often correlated with what was occurring with the title at present. Yet another example; when Frank Miller took over *Daredevil* in issues #158-182, early issues took off. Today, that title is quiet and other than #1 and #7 so are the Silver DDs. Again, all the early Marvel keys retain interest over time but this interest increases every time one of the originals has something earth-shattering occur at present.

So, if I'm right, what does any of this mean? Well, it would be a good idea to use this information to try and predict future trends. I'll step up and put my neck on the block... for starters, I'd say *X-Men* #1 is grossly undervalued! This book is one of the two or three most important Silver Age Marvels. Period! It's the first appearance AND origin of the X Men.

Why is it so much cheaper than *Spider-Man* #1? Usually when I pose this question I am told that it came out much later than *SP* #1. Well, not that much later! It was on the stands a mere six months after both *Spidey* #1 and *Tales Of Suspense* #39, the same month as *Avengers* #1, and only two months after *Strange Tales* #110. It came out with two slightly different covers, one has a light green in the indicia and the other a dark green.

It's got a white cover. Finding a non-cleaned white copy today is very difficult. If we want to go ahead and consider grade, it's a whole lot harder to find a nice VF or better *X-Men* #1 than it is a VF or better *Spider-Man* #1. Not to belittle *Spidey* #1 which is a terrifically important book... but, if you compare it to *X-Men* #1, you immediately note that *Spidey* #1 is not a first appearance or an origin. *Spidey* #1 doesn't have any new super villain or the origin of one. And *Spidey* #1 is by far the easiest key Marvel to find in any grade.

What, then, makes *Spider-Man* #1 so expensive? I don't know but I think partially because we as a buying public have simply blindly accepted it as being a very expensive book. In fact, it wasn't that long ago that it was guide-priced at the same level as *Amazing Fantasy* #15!!! (Probably the ultimate example of price guide silliness.)

We have also blindly accepted its place in the Silver Age hierarchy (kind of like we have *More Fun* #52, a great book, but who decided the Spectre's first appearance was worth 2-5x that of Dr. Fate's first appearance, which appeared just three months later?).

I firmly believe that sooner or later, *X-Men* #1 will catch up too... and even surpass *Spider-Man* #1 in value.

I think the rank order of value (when all this shakes out) will eventually be. (1) *Amazing Fantasy* #15; (2) *Fantastic Four* #1; (3) *Hulk* #1, (4) *X-men* #1; (5) and *Spider-Man* #1. The price and rank of *Tales Of Suspense* #39, *Tales To Astonish* #27, *Journey Into Mystery* #83, *Strange Tales* #110 (If 110 sported a Ditko/Dr. Strange cover it would easily rank much higher) *Daredevil* #1, and *Avengers* #1 will vary from time-to-time.

My guess is *Journey Into Mystery* #83 will eventually remain consistently higher priced than these others due to the fact that it's a 1962 book. Even so, old Goldilocks has never captured the public's imagination like some of the others, so I could be wrong. And *Daredevil* #1 is getting very scarce in NM even though it's a 1964 comic. In high grade, it may become rarer and in more demand than the rest in this group (but never in low to mid-grade).

COLLECTOR'S DICTIONARY

Fox•ing
1. Comic book defect caused when environmental conditions allow or promote the growth of mold(s) causing brown and/or grey spots which discolor the pages and cover. This condition usually occurs at the page edges

Pop•ped Sta•ple
1. A term used to describe a condition where the cover has split at the staple and has become detached or "popped loose."

And what about DC's?

I don't have the space to really discuss Silver Age DC or any Golden Age this time, but I can briefly touch on a few books of interest.

First, I think there are only a couple 12¢ DC's worth mentioning: *Atom* #1 and *Hawkman* #1 (neither character being hugely popular). In my experience, DC collectors do not appear driven by the same forces as do Marvel collectors, and I do not know why. In fact, there is no reason at all why some DCs are worth ANYTHING (please read *Adventure* #247 here), while really terrific books like *Showcase* #17 are, by comparison, very cheap!

Why then, would otherwise normal, intelligent, and highly respected human collectors like Mike Dalessandro be willing to spend upwards of five figures for the first appearance of the comic that brings the "sparkling" characters of Bouncing Boy and Shrinking Violet into the DC superhero universe?

Why did someone spend $5,000 (TWO YEARS AGO) on a VF/NM *Lois Lane* #1? Come to think of it, the more I try to understand the whys and wherefores of DC Silver Age collectors, the more confused I get!!!!

As always, your comments and opinions are welcome. Please send them to Contarino's Corner (Catchy column title huh?), P.O. Box 180900, Coronado, CA 92178-0900. Later ■

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WHAT IF... WE HAD SAVED THEM ALL? By Carl Horak

MOM NEVER THREW ANY OF MINE OUT.
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CARL HORAK

Is there a new glass ceiling for GA collectors?

Many collectors feel that this is the time of year when the market tends to slow down a bit... as the convention season winds down. Some even suggest that over the past few years the slowdown can actually be pinpointed to the period of December 23rd through January 2nd. The "Christmas Slowdown" may or may not occur in every locale, but the hunt for that "great stuff" never seems to slow down.

Pre Golden Age/Golden Age (1933-1945)

Overall the market is still just as popular and demand is just as great as before, the only shift is in the titles that are in demand. Although a nice collection of about sixty high grade Timelys sold very quickly at guide or slightly above prices, the multiples of guide on books over a thousand dollars are reportedly harder to move. Is there a new glass ceiling around the $3,000 price level? For every person that tells me that, there are two others to report sales above and beyond.

Sales: Plastic Man #3 FN $345; Flash #24 VF $1,200; Keen Detective Funnies #7 FN+ $350; Marvel Mystery "Annual" $4,000; Real Fact #16 VG $95; Red Ryder #1 VF $2,000; Sensation #3 FN $900; National Comics #5 AppVF $725; Rocket Kelly #1 FN $150; Submariner #3 VG $750; Target #7 GD/VG- $550; USA #4 FN $600; Batman #3 VG $990.

Post Golden Age/Pre Silver Age (1946-1956)

So if one wanted to really get into collecting these books (and plenty of people do), where would one go to find these books? That in itself is what is driving a fair portion of this market. These books are a mystery still. Where are they? How does one find information regarding these great books? There are definitely more questions than answers in this rapidly growing market. Matt Baker books continue to lead the way, as well as "undiscovered" Kubert, Wood, and Frazetta artwork.

Sales: Seven Seas #5 GD $250; Navy Combat #1 FN/VF $90; Pictorial Romances #21 VF $140; Romance Tales #9 FN $48; Startling Terror Tales #11 FN $225; Wonder #19 VF $265; Murder Inc. #2 FN $140; Sensation #108 VF $365; Rocket To The Moon FN+ $360; My Desire #3 VF/NM $165; My Secret #22 VF/NM $210; Teen Age Temptations #5 VG $65; Three Stooges #1 FN $420; Treasure Chest V17 #10, NM $110; Kaanga #1 FN $150; Western Bandit Trails #2 VF $110.

Silver Age (1956-1969)

What is going on with this Silver Age market? Books are selling when adjusted at market levels when they are below a VF/NM grade, an argument that many long time collectors have been making for some time now.

Many collectors are once again looking at Silver, but in a slightly different way. A high grade book is a high grade book and a premium will forever be attached to it, but when a VG book is based upon a NM premium collectors began to shy away. Now that a few sellers are pricing at a more realistic level, movement is once again starting on these books. Believe it or not, this same practice was common in the early '90s with Golden Age - funny how that all turned out.

Sales: Batman #181 FN $48; Fantastic Four #5 VG $550; Amazing Spider-Man #1 VG $2,400; Journey Into Mystery #83 VG $720; Secret Six #1 NM $80; Flintstones #34 NM $50; Nick Fury #1 NM $70; Star Trek #1 VF/NM $600; X-Men #2 GD $120; Movie Classic - The Mummy NM $59; Justice League Of America #21 VF/NM $320; Green Lantern #16 VF/NM $150; Captain America #100 FN $120; GI Combat #108 VF $75; Fantastic Four #48 VF $700; Wendy, The Good Little Witch #1 FN $75.

Continued on page 72

CHRISTIES COMIC AUCTION RESULTS

Attn: Collectibles Dept.
502 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10022

(Prices include the 15% auction premium but do not include applicable sales tax!)

Action #1 App FN68	$63,250
Action #7 App FN73	$4,830
All-Star #1 (Mile High) NM94	$36,800
All-Star #2 FN59	$1,380
Amazing Spider-Man #1 App FN69	$2,530
Amazing Fantasy #15 FN70	$5,750
Amazing Fantasy #15 AppFN70	$2,300
Avengers #1 NM90	$2,990
Batman #1 App VF79	$13,800
Detective #168 FN67	$1,265
Detective #225 FN57	$1,380
Detective #225 FN65	$1,150
Flash #105 NM93	$9,775
Four Color #108 VF80	$1,150
Green Lantern #1 Golden Age VG45	$4,025
New York Worlds Fair 1940 VG53	$3,220
Showcase #1 FN57	$690
Showcase #4 VG52	$3,450
Showcase #6 FN62	$1,265
Showcase #8 VF76	$4,025
Showcase #10 (Bethlehem) NM91	$6,900
Showcase #14 VF84	$5,750
Showcase #19 (double cvr) NM93	$4,370
Showcase #22	$920
Strange Tales #1 (Bethlehem) FN73	$2,530
Sub-Mariner #1 VG44	$3,220
Superboy #1 App FN69	$1,955
Superman #13 & #32 VF85 the pair	$2,530
Tales of Suspense #39 VF78	$1,380
Tales of Suspense #1 & #2 VF77 the pair	$1,955
Walt Disney's Comics & Stories #1 VG44	$1,840.

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THE MATT SCHIFFMAN REPORT

Post Silver Age/Bronze Age (1970s)

Discoveries anywhere are exciting, but the flavor that this is an entirely new market and new discoveries are being made everyday. Just as GA collectors talk about unseen issues, '70s collectors are sharing the same information. Larry Harman's Laurel and Hardy, DC 1972? Good Luck! Prices for the Kirby reprints are reaching many multiples of guide, as well as the Horror\Gothic Romance books. Even with the focused attention over the past year, these books just have not surfaced in great numbers.

Sales: Rima #1 VF/NM $8; First Issue Special #4 NM $12; Unknown Soldier #219 NM $10; Ringo Kid #1 VF/NM $16; Johnny Thunder #1 NM $14; Adventure #431 NM $18; Supergirl #1 VF/NM $8; Chamber Of Chills #1 NM $9; Where Monsters Dwell #1 VF/NM $18; Shazam #8 $15; Star Spangled War Stories #151 VF/NM $95; New Gods #1 VF/NM $50; The Phantom #74 NM $14; Star Wars #107 NM $85; Superfriends #1 VF/NM $12.

Renewed Interest

It seemed for awhile there that everyone was a tried and true Golden Age fan, almost exclusively. Its great to see collectors back into the Silver Age, pre and mid-Silver Science Fiction, Romance, '70's, Pre-Gold and plenty of other great genres and eras that make our hobby diverse and interesting.

It's not JUST comic books, and not JUST all superheroes. With interest over a broad spectrum, the market remains healthy, the hobby continues to grow, and maybe, just maybe, someone will "spur" a renewed interest in Westerns. ■

MARKET REPORTS

Continued from page 70

GREG WHITE • COMICS & COLLECTIBLES

17 W Monument Avenue
Kissimmee, Florida 34741
(407) 870-0400

Hello and welcome to central Florida. As our weather cools down (80 degrees is cool for us!) autumn sales have flattened out. This is typical at this time of year. We do not see as many tourists in October as during the summer or holiday season.

Heavy demand continues for certain books (Timely, Chesler books, villain appearances) while demand is light for many others (Fawcett, funny animal, lower grade DC). Mail order sales remain steady as long as the books are priced 20-30% below guide. This trend has affected the rate that we pay for many collections.

Even so, I have never seen a year where so many good books have come my way (OK the huge Golden Age group I bought in 1994 rates up there, however all those books came in just two groups). Quality product is offered almost on a weekly basis, and we have bought most of it! I do believe the drought will eventually come and at that time it will be nice to have these collections to draw from.

Golden Age (1935-55)

An active area this month. Many books were purchased by the store including Timely's, DC and an interesting group of mid '40's esoteric titles. Little by little, we will break these collections down and be able to supplement our web page catalog. Sales: Batman #32 VG $200, Flash #78 GD $60, Human Torch #4 VG $750, Four Color #147 VF $400.

Silver Age (1956-69)

The collections we purchased over the summer have begun to move. We were able to sell full runs of JLA #1-34 and Flash #116-150. Early Marvel have also moved well this month. As always certain issues are difficult to replace. I have numerous copies of Spider-Man #14 in lower grade but where are the VF-NM copies? Demand continues for mid to late 1950's DC. Showcase and Brave & Bold are hot titles. We recently picked up the first appearance of Green Lantern and Martian Manhunter in reasonable shape. Dell and Gold Key photo covers will sell if priced within reason - but forget getting full guide here, especially on the grossly overpriced books with John Wayne, Ricky Nelson, or Annette on the covers. The 1950's Atlas superhero revival books move well (big surprise huh?).Try to buy a Young Men #24 for guide. I have one customer who has offered to pay $2500 for a high grade copy if I could find it!

Sales: Spidey #6 FN $400, F.F. 25 VG $75, Detective 225 VG $450, Brave & Bold 31 FN $75, Jonny Quest 1 VG $42, Doom Patrol 89 VF $38, Hulk 2 FN $350.

Original Art & Toys

Quiet this month. No notable pieces came our way. Demand is high for Silver Age art. We had only one request for strip art recently and were able to sell a 1949 Archie Sunday page. People continue to ask for work by Barks, Schultz, and Frazetta and the few pieces we sold found homes quickly.

That will wrap up our report for October. We hope you had a happy Halloween and are heading towards a fine holiday season. When visiting the Walt Disney World area please stop by and say hello! See you in thirty!

ROB HUGHES • ARCHANGELS

1116 8th Street, Suite 106
Manhattan Beach, California 90266
(310) 335-1359

The market has quieted down quite a bit this year, which has left a few collectors concerned about the future of this hobby. What I have to say is "do not worry!" It's only natural that there be a "cooling off" period after the leaps and bounds that comic book values have undergone since the early nineties. I predict prices will begin to become much more reasonable in relation to guide, which means

more affordable comics across the board. (Of course, premium grade material will continue to command premium dollars, but these books and transactions will become the exception rather than the norm.) As we enter the holiday season, collectors will again see more catalogs as the conventions have all but passed for 1996.

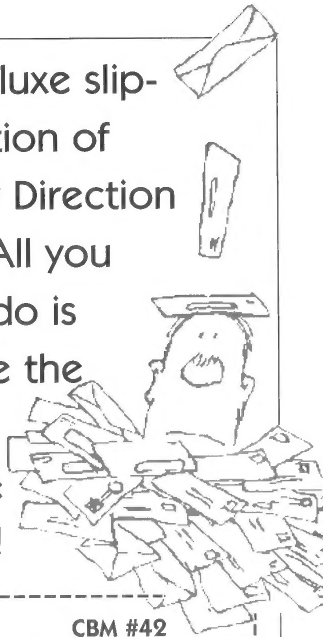
Sales have calmed somewhat but are still steady. Golden Age is still holding the premium spotlight in many areas. Example: Flash Comics #1 AppFN/VF $12,000 Action #10 AppFN+ $2,500 Exciting #9 FN- $2,800 Detective #29 FN+ $2,500 Young Allies #24 VG+ $650 All Top #10 VF $700 Startling #48 VF $550 Walt Disney's Comics & Stories #36 FN/VF $300 and two stunning copies of Jamboree #1 & #2 sold for $150 and $100 respectively.

High grade Silver Age & 70's Marvels are moving very well at the present (no news here). Sales include Amazing Spider-Man #55, #59, #61, #67,#69, #70, #73, #75, #77, #79, & #80 all in NM- at $1,100 the set Fantastic Four #55 NM- (White Mtn.) $210 , #67 NM+ $200, #68 NM (White Mtn) $100, #71 NM+ (White Mtn) $100 , #75 NM/MT $95 #76 NM/MT $100 #77 NM+ $75 #78 NM/MT $100 #91 NM/MT $45 #92 NM/MT $45.

Now back to work on the 2nd Fall/Winter catalog. Hope all of you find the rare and elusive gems you search for. ■

Congratulations — Dean Wong, Dave Grisez, and Mike Willis for winning the CBM #41 drawing. Your EC reprint editions of MAD 1-6 (in full color) are on the way! Just our way of saying thanks to CBM readers for participating in this issue's Most Collectible Comics survey!

Win a deluxe slip-case edition of EC's New Direction comics! All you have to do is complete the coupon below, & mail it in!



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